LANDFALL

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NOTES

I

THE committee of the State Literary Fund is to be congratulated on making a grant to Allen Curnow to enable him to spend a year overseas. It is fitting that one of the first of the country's poets and critics—the only New Zealand writer whose standing is equally high in both fields—should be the first to receive such a grant ; Mr Curnow has not been abroad before, and no one could better represent New Zealand letters than he.

It is to be hoped that other similar grants may be made from time to time. Writers in this country have to work as teachers, journalists, librarians and the like to support themselves ; while there is a constant demand upon their nominally ' free ' time for lectures and broadcasts and summer schools (whether in their professional capacity or as writers), a demand very difficult to resist in a small community. The danger of this pressure is that they will simply dry up from a combination of exhaustion and frustration. Works of art cannot be turned out like scones. Ideas for them, inspirations if you will, are not offered every day even to the genius. If the ideas have to be rejected again and again for sheer lack of time, they will cease to occur. And, when it comes, an idea needs time to grow, to ripen in the mind ; this means that the writer must have leisure for rumination, for apparent idleness (in fact no born writer, no artist in any medium, is ever idle in the usual sense : his mind and his sensibilities never cease to work), for periods of gestation ; we may recall T. S. Eliot's remark about the poet's ' necessary receptivity and necessary laziness.' In short, if you want the writer to write, set him free to do so, and leave him alone. To give writers a period of freedom is therefore the best way (apart from making grants for publication) in which the state can aid literature.

II

THE State Literary Fund also made a grant towards the publication of *The Pioneers and Other Poems* by Arnold Wall. According to a note on the dust-jacket this is intended ' as a final collection of his work.' It contains three hundred and sixty one poems (the table

of contents occupies eleven pages) set solid, without any division into sections, even of serious pieces, light verse and jingles, without any indication as to chronological or other order or previous publication if any, and, though well printed, is bound and jacketed to look like the deadliest of text-books. The result is so forbidding that no conscientious reviewer is likely to face the book without dismay or finish it without vertigo.

Professor Wall states in a preface that but for the Literary Fund's grant the book would have been a much smaller one, and it must be asked whether a smaller book at a lower price than fifteen shillings would not have been more widely read. A good selection of Professor Wall's work would be welcome, but he is not one of the poets whose every trifle need be preserved with the aid of the public purse. The State Literary Fund will hardly increase its reputation by being associated with publications so ill-planned and so unfortunate in appearance.

III

THE Canterbury Society of Arts has added a further illustrious page to the annals of art in New Zealand.

Last year the Society decided at a general meeting that a painting by the late Frances Hodgkins would be a good addition to the Society's collection, since neither it nor the McDougall Gallery possesses any of her work.

With the help of the British Council three of her oils and three water colours were brought out from London on approval, and were hung in the Society's gallery in Armagh Street. But this did not mean that they were being shown to the public : such is not the Society's way ; mysterious notices put up beneath them explained that they were not really on view (the annual Group Show was hanging in the gallery at the same time) and must not be photographed or mentioned in the press.

Of these paintings, two of the oils had been shown in a British Council Exhibition of Contemporary Art in Sweden, and one water-colour at least in an exhibition of British water-colours at the Brooklyn Museum in New York, while one is reproduced in the Penguin Modern Painters *Frances Hodgkins* ; all come from well-known London dealers. They are, that is, quite reputable paintings and they belong to the later period of the painter's work,

of which there are no examples in public collections in New Zealand.

The Council of the Society held a meeting to consider them (the proceedings were rumoured to be lively) and decided by a majority vote not to purchase any. The decision met with some public disapproval, and after a hard-hitting signed correspondence in the Christchurch *Press*, and after a petition asking for reconsideration of the decision had been signed by a considerable number of visitors to the gallery, a further meeting of the Council was held with the same result as before.

The Council had not advertised the arrival of the paintings, but news of them had by now reached Dunedin and Wellington and there were requests to have them shown in those cities. The requests were stone-walled : the Council apparently did not wish any other body to buy one of the paintings and so make it look foolish ; its only aim now was to end the matter quickly and quietly, and as the president (who was not in favour of this) disclosed, some members urged that they should be packed up and sent back to England. But finally Dunedin prevailed.

Meanwhile, in December, the Society held its annual meeting. At this, the three members of the Council who had been most active in promoting the purchase of one of the paintings were voted off the Council by a ticket vote originated by members associated with the Canterbury School of Art. The School is the stronghold of the ' established ' Canterbury painters, nine of whom are now officers of the Society.

The most interesting reason which has been offered for the decision not to purchase one of the paintings in question is that if such work were to be shown and become popular it would spoil the market for the work of local painters.

One question remains. What would have happened to one of the paintings if the Society had bought it? Would it too have been preserved jealously in the darkness and dust of the rooms behind the Armagh Street gallery where for so many years the Society's collection has been shown only to the spiders?

IV

In countries such as our own, without a written constitution, the powers of the executive in certain spheres are not well defined.

But if a government can retain and give to the press for publication, on whatever plea, the private correspondence of citizens, its power can have few limits, and there can be little safeguard against it for the individual.

In such a situation, critics of society or government—and one government is likely to prove much the same as another, if it possesses such power—will feel themselves under constant threat; no journalist or author will be secure in the exercise of his profession ; no private life safe from invasion.

It may be that this power, even if not challenged, is unlikely to be exercised often in normal times—if any times are now normal. But the mere existence of it, the knowledge that it may be used at any moment, on any excuse, will have a stifling and blighting effect upon the whole political and intellectual life of the country. Independent newspapers and journals will exist precariously, upon sufferance ; the fate of *Tomorrow* should not be forgotten.

V

LAST year the New Zealand Film Censor brought opprobrium on himself by banning the film *Brighton Rock*. The censorship of films does however operate publicly. But the censorship of books in New Zealand is operated in secret: no announcement is made when a book is banned or placed on the 'dangerous' list: no list of such books is available to the public.

News has now leaked out of an attempt to secure the suppression of Dan Davin's novel *For the Rest of our Lives*. Fantastic and sinister as this is, it should at last force upon the notice of a too acquiescent public the vicious system of secret censorship.

Maurice Duggan

Six Place Names and a Girl

KOMATA . . . a dark green creek hung over with yellowing willows and the clay bank scarred with gorse, the water clear and cold and running fast. A long clean dive from the bank then down through the water with a sudden surge of bubbles in the underwater wake, then twice up and down the length of the swimming hole and on to the bank to dry in the sun. Komata, with the hills going up behind the crumbling maori cowshed, gorse bright in the paddocks, a scatter of cows moving in to milking.

AWAITI . . . sitting in the shallow punt. Sitting very quietly with the decoys bobbing out on the swamp. Sitting in the damp dark before the dawn waiting for the birds to come over. Wild duck. Everything very quiet but a breeze in the reeds and two maoris in the other boat leaning together, smoking and talking very softly into the wind. Then daylight beginning slowly and breaking fast and the ducks coming over scattered and a long way up, too high to shoot, until the maoris start calling through their closed fists and the flight breaks up even more and a few birds drop down to the noise and the decoys. Then with them flying over the shotguns firing very ragged in the cold light and the retrievers out of the boat into the cold swamp water. Breakfast on hash and eggs and the long ride back through the soggy roads in the mangroves, riding maori horses mudsplashed and jaded with standing saddled all night. And the birds ruffled and shot strung together over the saddle, thumping against the horse at every step.

HIKUTAIA . . . the valley and the place where we played polo as kids on short slow stockmen's horses, riding without a saddle so you had to turn the horses with your knees. Homemade polo sticks and a cased cricket ball, the horses sweating and winded and the sticks swinging and the sharp knock when the ball was hit and the sharp voices out of the haze of dust. That was where

we dug up the maori skull and the chipped greenstone mere and the pieces of baked clay that looked like pottery of some sort but which were only after all baked clay, baked hard and orange-coloured in the fire.

NGATEA . . . the long bridge over the river, the camping ground where they had the fair that night I ran away from home and stopped there about midnight when they were packing up to move on the next morning. The festoons of light going out, the dull sounds of hammering, the merry-go-round horses leaning faded and stiff in a heap against a wagon, the gramophone grinding endlessly . . .

Rain,
When you gonna rain again Rain,
Make the rivers deep again,
Shower,
Your blessin's on me.
Rain . . .

Over everything the sound of the flooded river. The car lights crossing the bridge. I stayed and slept cold and alone and afraid under a stiff tarpaulin and the moon came up and shone through the tent flap and the grey tarpaulin looked like the moon's surface, hump and hollow, the rough canvas strung with shadows . . .

Riding on next morning, very early, the dew still on the grass, the cattle still some of them lying on the paddocks, the hills I would have to cross still night shadowed. Picked up by a commercial traveller who tied my pushbike on to the back of his car and sat beside him while in the back seat loose boxes of corsets spilled open on to the floor. And even so early in the morning the traveller was drunk and kept squeezing my knee until I was riding on the road again while he drove off shouting and drunk with a cloud of dust spinning up from the wheels . . .

KARANGAHAKE . . . and climbing over the abandoned mine workings under the rotting timbers in the old tunnels and coming out on a sheer cliff face and peering down and there, miles below, a white flicker of water between the banks. Old houses on the plateau with the doors broken in and all the window glass smashed and toi-toi growing up through the planks on the verandah. Logging tracks out of the bush and a miner walking

about with a black beard and a washing pan or bent over the yellow river rocking the pan back and forth his shirt split down the back and old sinewed white skin showing through. An old post office with *Victoria Regina* on a plaque. Summer and the sun shining and a breeze coming through the funnel of the gorge.

WAIHI and the beach. Bowentown and fishing for shark. Names . . . Black Rock, Kopu, Old Mill Road, Tackere Creek, . . . people . . . Dooky Hukina . . . Cora . . . Penny Royal . . . Pelly . . . Freddie Jepson the drover who everybody said was a remittance man. Living all summer with the maoris at Komata, eating enormously and drinking home brewed beer and singing on the wide verandah in the evening with the maori voices all singing in harmony, the lyrics all toned down with the maori sound, so that if you were not a maori you stopped singing and just listened a long time in the light summer night with the home brew bottles going round and the old maoris back in the shadow, listening and talking.

PELLY. Was it short for something . . . Pelly? Dark and slim and very shy with long black hair that was like silk shining in the night. In the night her bedroom next to mine and I lay there night after night trying to be brave enough to go out into the long cool passage with the oil lamp burning . . . so long that she came eventually to where I lay awake under the window, the moon not yet up, dark skin you could not see in the dark night. Only smooth under your hand and the long hair along the pillow and you wondered why you had waited so long and it went on like that all summer and her mother knew and her family knew and teased me at milking in the mornings while she only smiled and said nothing, not embarrassed, not to stop them, until by the time I had to go they were all used to it and stood at the verandah edge and waved and said, You better come back soon before she is old and knows too much, and, Goodbye ehoa, and the Tukakina girls with flowers in their hair.

Back to my father who was angry that I had stayed there all summer because they bought from his store and owed him money and how could he even ask them for it when I had probably eaten it out in food.

Paul Henderson

Three Poems

THE BELL AND THE BAUBLE

HAVING visited within a month both circus and ballet,
We have had to consider how place, chameleon-like,
Changes, grows, pulsates under the impact of prejudice
And under the combined thought of many people.

That is how we wonder does the mind
Invest place with peculiar atmosphere
As that of Saturday (women drying their hair in the sun,
Dismembered shouts of the football match, lilliputian

Across the park). What makes the magic of a circus
From tents on an ugly vacant lot, a wizened acrobat,
And the shoddy get-up of the clowns? What changes
A dilapidated theatre into a lake of swans?

It is habit to notice the calm of Sunday morning
As though things, not only men, have folded their hands :
But Monday turmoil, being examined, is mind-made
Against the fields' continual yet abundant Sunday.

So worlds are formed within minds, growing tangible,
We defend the sawdust and tinsel, the tawdry trappings,
Remembering how as children we made of a circus
A shining bauble no cold reason will injure.

No child forms in the ballet music, past projected,
But the unattained, the impossible loves, what heights of conquest
Grow warm under our hands. Within this bell
Of sound and silver movement it is hard to consider

What is, or not ; place is transmuted
In crystal showers on ear, on eye, on mind
Till, part of us, the Spectre will inhabit always
Here where we were gods in a brief moment.

A SAILOR THEY SAY

A SAILOR they say is everlastingly complaining. But the sea
Grows in his bones and he must go back to it. I too
Have in my heart the compounded essence of all elements,
And the joy and exhilaration and the fear too I will reduce
To universal understanding. No menace of wind or sea or
Mountain will obliterate for I will take fear and strangle
It and hold it up to the sunlight poor gutless thing.
Sea, sky and storm scarify the flesh the nakedness
Of the body till in the end I have taken them not they
My defencelessness, and I will reach out strong seeking hands
For the bones of the world and know them as I know now
The sweet bones of my love. And you bright land
May laugh then, hard mirth ring from peak to iron
Peak, clang in the sea caves ; sea, wind and sky join
With the land with the mockery of untold elements.
For whom do I fight, in the end? Yourself, or my own mind?

RAIN ON THE JOURNEY

NEARING Oamaru the sky lightens,
But briefly ; to the north clouds drift
Again engulfing the last outpost
Of hill, echoing sea, and lonely island.
No mountains now tramp their interminable route march
In the west. Three days ago they were purple,
Looming, with the first storm wrack
Insidiously attacking. To-day

There is no room in the world for mountains.
Only the road, and trees always being come upon
In ghost groups. Rivers crossed
Too easily, on bridges somebody else sweated over, building,
And small towns beaded on the highway
Each isolate, globed in glass rigor
Mist has made actual. I, travelling,
Cannot penetrate this bell, immobilized

By time and place and shut thought, brain
Bound by its own accident
And left so soon. Names ring,
This sound in the mind becoming
Their only being ; we fail to hold
Events not circling in our small orbit
Narrowed by fear.
The day narrowed by storm
Shut out the hanging ice of the mountains

And the whelming sun. Notice the red
Of wet willow branches, late season's leaves,
And the shot blue-green of the snow torrent
More brilliant now than in sunlight.
Seldom this near, rain beauty
Yet the impatient mind
Looks for a break in the cloud, a wider prospect,
As though, arriving in sunshine, we could offer
The old illusion of a happy ending.

James Bertram

The Chinese Communists

FORTUNE'S wheel, in China, has taken a pretty complete turn during the past year ; and the military success of the ' Communist ' armies—an almost indecent success against so many American dollars and war-dumps—has sharply focussed attention upon the men who made it. What is the secret of the strength of this movement that rolled so irresistibly down to the Yangtse, and what is the nature of its leadership? What sort of people are the Chinese Communists—patriots, reformers, or international revolutionaries? What are their relations with Russia, and how much of their recent success have they owed to Russian support? What sort

of policy, internal and external, are they likely to follow now that effective power for more than half of China is in their hands?

These questions badly need authoritative answers and 1949 may give us some of them. But meantime a brief note on the background of the movement, with a few first-hand personal impressions, may be useful.

The Chinese Communist Party was formed in 1920 by a small group of students and intellectuals in Shanghai: the group included some of the present Communist leaders, and some whose subsequent careers have been less consistent with Marxist beliefs. In 1923 Sun Yat-sen, leader of the revolutionary Nationalist Party (Kuomintang),* having sought in vain for other outside assistance from the Western powers, found that Soviet Russia was willing to help organize and train the Nationalist forces in their struggle with the northern warlords. The formula under which this aid was given is still worth quoting: it is contained in a joint memorandum issued by Dr Sun and Adolph Joffe (a Russian diplomat) in Shanghai:

'Dr Sun Yat-sen holds that the communistic order or even the Soviet system cannot actually be introduced into China, because there do not exist here the conditions for the successful establishment of communism or sovietism. This view is entirely shared by Mr Joffe, who is further of the opinion that China's paramount and most pressing problem is to achieve national unification and attain full national independence.'

This is an extract from a relatively ancient diplomatic document and the years between have seen some revolutions of diplomacy in Soviet (and other) quarters. But the record proves, I think, that from 1923 to 1948 Russian policy towards China—through revolution, counter-revolution, civil war, world war, and civil

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* The original Kuomintang—successor to the first conspiratorial anti-Manchu party organized by Sun Yat-sen, which succeeded almost by accident in 1911 with the collapse of the Empire and the founding of the Chinese Republic—was a fairly representative grouping of the 'progressive' bloc of merchants, farmers, students and soldiers. It had no pronounced class-basis, and was able in these early years to include the rising financial power of such merchant families as the Soongs on the one hand, and the Chinese Communists on the other: with an inclusive middle section of almost all progressively-minded patriotic Chinese.

war again—has remained entirely consistent with the view expressed in it.

To return to the Chinese Communist Party. During the years of 'Russian influence' in China (from 1924 to 1927) it made considerable headway, and played a particularly important propagandist role in the Northern Expedition from Canton to the Yangtse that carried Chiang Kai-shek into power. This was the time when Chu Teh, Peng Teh-huai, Ho Lung and others made their first big reputations as soldiers; when Mao Tse-tung, first prominent as a leader of peasant unions, and Chou En-lai, the brain behind the Shanghai rising, emerged as outstanding political organizers.* It was the only time in recent Chinese history when foreigners (the Russians Bluecher and Borodin) have really played a decisive part in internal Chinese politics. That part was to organize the mass movement of peasants and workers, and keep it solidly behind the Kuomintang—whose goal, it must be repeated, was not communism, but the national and 'bourgeois-democratic' revolution.

The precise relation of the C.C.P. to the K.M.T. during the years 1920-27 is not easy to give in a few words, and at certain points there were great wrangles as to whether or not Communist party members should be allowed to remain full members of the K.M.T. But in the event (chiefly thanks to the influence of Dr Sun himself in his last years) they did remain effectively within the K.M.T. until the split of 1927. The role of the C.C.P. over this period might be chronologically summarized as follows: (1) a predominantly bourgeois-intellectual 'fringe' of the Nationalist movement; (2) a leading labour force in the growing trade union movement and the great strikes in Canton and Hongkong; (3) a concentrated propagandist element in the 'Whampoa' period, when for example Chou En-lai was chief of the political training department at the Whampoa Academy, while Chiang Kai-shek was its military chief; (4) a limited, but highly concentrated force within the armies of the Northern Expedition, where a few Communist-dominated divisions were later to form the cadres of the Red Army, after the Nanchang Rising in 1927.

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* Chu and Peng are still Commander and Vice-Commander respectively of the 'People's Liberation Army' in North China; Mao and Chou are still the Stalin and Molotov of the Chinese Communist Party.

Borodin has been represented as the type of an international incendiary : but a very different picture emerges from the pages of Vincent Sheean's *Personal History*, and readers of Andre Malraux's *La Condition Humaine* will remember the unsympathetic (from Malraux's then ultra-revolutionary standpoint) portraits of the Bolshevik leaders in Hankow : cold-blooded, practical men whose whole effort was to put the brakes on any proletarian rising. In a recent book by an experienced American journalist (Randall Gould, *China in the Sun*) Borodin is directly quoted as having said at this time :

' Canton ' (*i.e.*, the revolutionary movement up to 1927) ' is not communistic ; there is a hard struggle for political, economic and social progress such as other countries have already gone through several hundred years ago. Take the political side—where else in the world could one have a political programme consisting only of the two words " good government "?'

The inner history of this period, and especially of the role of the Comintern, is obscured by the dust of the great Stalin-Trotsky controversy, which was fought out to a finish on the issue of China. But the most important point about that half-forgotten battle of Marxian giants is, surely, the fact that Stalin won. Henceforth —at least, so long as Stalin's influence prevailed—the U.S.S.R. would concentrate on the building of socialism within one country and revolution would no longer be an article of export.

In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek turned upon the leftists in his own ranks and in a few weeks of terror broke the back of the mass movement the Russians had done so much to help build up. Borodin and his staff packed up and returned to Moscow : with the failure of the ill-timed Canton Commune of December, 1927 (which coincided with the Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, at which Stalin completed his conquest of the Trotskyist Opposition) the period of direct Russian intervention in Chinese internal affairs came to an end. That chapter was closed : it has not, since, been re-opened.

I have dwelt upon this earlier period because it is still too little known—or where it is known, too often misrepresented. Chiang Kai-shek in 1927 was able to pose as the strong man who had saved China from a revolution the Russians were making : the pose became habitual and he has kept it up. But anyone who

wishes to discover the theoretical basis of the approved and official Russian attitude will find it in the chapers on 'The Stages of the Chinese Revolution' in Stalin's treatise on *Nationalism*—a monumental summing-up in which it is reiterated that in a semi-feudal country there are no short-cuts to proletarian revolution. This treatise is the framework on which the Chinese Communists were later to be able to rear their very moderate reformist programme of 'New Democracy,' and still call themselves good Marxists.

For nearly ten years after 1927 the Chinese Communists were forced into armed opposition : they were fighting for their lives, and at this time they followed a policy of sovietization in the restricted areas they controlled. Little was heard of them in the outer world except through the vividly impressionistic books of Agnes Smedley, based on authentic Chinese materials reaching her in Shanghai. But civil war is a cruel business ; and it was upon accounts of 'Red Army atrocities,' generally coming from missionary sources, that outside opinion in these years was often formed.* It was not until Edgar Snow broke the long news-blockade in 1936, to bring back and publish a reliable first-hand account of the Chinese Communist leaders, their army organization and their epic 'Long March' from the south to northwest China, that something of the heroic and constructive side of this 'Red Army' period was generally appreciated.

From this point on, the history of the Chinese Communists is much more fully documented. The year 1936 brought the spectacular 'kidnapping' of Chiang Kai-shek by his second-in-command, the 'Young Marshal' Chang Hsueh-liang, at Sian—where the role of the Communists, brilliantly successful and the first striking proof of their statesmanship as well as their fighting

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* Such opinions persist. In London in 1939, when I had just returned from the North China front, Pearl Buck showed me the proof-sheet of her novel, *The Patriot*. In it was a scene in which a Chinese Communist General, apparently Mao Tse-tung, had Japanese prisoners brought before him for the pleasure of watching them have their eyes gouged out. I protested that I had seen many Japanese prisoners with the Communist forces, and that they were invariably well-treated : that it was Eighth Route Army policy then to release all prisoners not of commissioned rank, if they wished to return to their units. Pearl Buck did not question my statement ; but she left the scene in her novel.

quality, was to be intercession to preserve the life and secure the release of their oldest and bitterest enemy. That their tactics on this occasion (which brought about the end of the civil war and made possible a united Chinese resistance to Japan) were entirely their own and independent of the Comintern, I can confirm at first hand : I had been in Peiping when the news of Chiang Kai-shek's capture threw all China into panic, and was able to make my way to Sian shortly afterwards. I brought with me copies of the official Russian despatches in *Pravda*, in which the kidnapping was condemned and the Young Marshal denounced as a decadent warlord with whom the Red Army had no sort of connection. I passed on the despatches to Chou En-lai, chief Communist representative in Sian, who was both amused and concerned that Moscow should have got things so badly wrong. Yenan in those days had no radio : I was asked, as a correspondent of the London *Daily Herald*, to help set *Pravda* right by a story in a British Labour newspaper!

After 1938, when the Eighth Route Army was winning battles against the Japanese and when Snow's *Red Star over China* had appeared, the Chinese Communists began to get a more favourable press abroad. I had been the first British correspondent to make contact with them, and I spent six months of the winter of 1937-38 with Ho Lung's division in the field. It is not difficult to explain the almost universal enthusiasm with which foreign newspapermen wrote of this ' people's army,' for they would allow a correspondent to go anywhere he pleased, in the rear or the front lines. And they were a pretty good outfit to be with. Perhaps the N.Z.E.F. had something of the same democratic relationship between officers and men—I don't know—but I can vouch for the difference between the Eighth Route and the British or U.S. systems. The atmosphere at Chu Teh's Army or Ho Lung's Divisional Headquarters was pleasantly informal ; there was very little saluting, and small boys in grey cotton uniforms would nip in with cups of tea and try to entice the Commander-in-chief out to a game of basketball. Nobody wore any badges of rank, for all officers and most of the men were known to each other, and the only decoration seen was the white enamelled star that indicated ten years' service with the old Red Army. But these staffs were efficient—the army was a fighting army, excelling in mobility and the swift concentration of forces for any operation ; and their

good relation with the local peasants, which was more than half their strength, was most scrupulously preserved.

The war record of the Eighth Route Army against the Japanese is impressive ; so too was its rapid enlargement and re-equipment, from three divisions of twenty thousand men each in 1937, to a force in 1945 of perhaps a million regulars, with at least another million trained auxiliaries. Where did the arms come from? Not from Russia, at any rate. I can still remember the indignation of Peng Teh-huai when I met him in 1938, after he had just returned from a conference with Chiang Kai-shek in Hankow. This was a time when Russian arms and equipment—more arms and equipment than the U.S.A. supplied to China during the whole course of the war against Japan—were freely entering China by the overland north-western route, and being convoyed down to Chungking. But ' Not one gun, not one bullet, will *your* army get from me, so long as this war lasts! ' the Generalissimo had told Peng then : and he kept his word.

In addition to what its own small arsenals produced, the Eighth Route Army during the war with Japan got its equipment, piece by piece, from the enemy : it got its fighting recruits by voluntary enlistment, not by conscription. And the same thing has been true since the renewal of civil war in 1946. There is no direct evidence, to my knowledge, to support the charge often made—for example, by such reputable writers as Vernon Bartlett and Geoffrey Hudson—that the Russians in Manchuria turned over large stocks of captured Japanese war material to the Chinese Communist forces. And the only foreign correspondent who *has* been in Manchuria in 1946-47, Anna Louise Strong,* quotes the Chinese Communist commander in that area, General Lin Piao, as stating categorically that the Russians gave him nothing. ' No troops, no weapons, no advisers, nothing! Whatever men and arms came with the Red Army into Manchuria, went back when the Red Army left. Whatever store of arms the Russians took from the Japs in Manchuria, they either took with them back to Russia or destroyed on the spot.' Miss Strong checked this statement ' again and again ' in Manchuria, and claims that it was accurate. I can only add that, from my own personal belief in the integrity of both spokesman and reporter, I accept this statement

* Anna Louise Strong, *Tomorrow's China*, New York, December 1948.

rather than the assertion of commentators who have been no nearer the spot than London or Shanghai. I accept also Miss Strong's evidence that the Russian frontier in Manchuria has remained sealed since the Red Army withdrew.

The artillery and heavy equipment which, in 1948, made it possible for the Communists to change their hit-and-run tactics and begin the siege or frontal assault of defended cities, was for the most part American equipment taken from the opposing Nationalist forces. In this sense, and hardly by intention, American military aid to Chiang Kai-shek may be said to have made possible the Communist-led victory in North China.

But military equipment alone could never have been decisive. Obviously the 'People's Liberation Army'—to give them the title they have used since the end of the Japanese war—have had the support of a majority of the peasants and common folk in North China. Nothing less than this would explain the mass desertions to their side by Nationalist troops. And this support has been given for a programme which remains, in all essentials, the programme of Sun Yat-sen and the revolutionary Kuomintang of twenty years ago. It is not a programme of communism, but a programme of land reform, tax-reduction and representative elected local government. One of the strongest points in the Communists' favour, over the past years, has been their voluntary restriction of Communist representation on any elected government to one-third of the total membership. No doubt it was a powerful third, with the strength of the army behind it: but the principle is important and a new one in China.*

There are many small and characteristically Chinese details about some of the Communist leaders that help to explain their prestige—their ability to quote from the classics in official telegrams, for example: Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai are excellent classical scholars and poets, Chu Teh writes a much

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* See, for an indication of the kind of government projected in North China, the 'Organic Outline of the North China People's Government' adopted by the North China Provisional People's Representative Assembly, August 1948; and reprinted in translation in the *China Digest*, November 30, 1948. See also Anna Louise Strong, *Tomorrow's China*, Chapter 3, for a useful summary of the present 'New Democracy' programme advocated by the Chinese Communists.

better brush-hand than Chiang Kai-shek. One is tempted to add personal recollections, though these don't really help much (Stalin can be very charming, he can also be very rude, a retiring U.S. Ambassador in Moscow has told us ; no doubt the same could be said of Roosevelt, of Churchill, or of Hitler). I have heard Chu Teh preach a sermon in a Christian church, but this does not make him a Christian ; I have seen Mao Tse-tung, in his cave in Yenan, gratefully receive the special ration of cigarettes voted to him by the Border Region Government (he is a chain-smoker) —but this doesn't, I think, show him up as a specially privileged V.I.P. Westerners have for too long been misled by these personal details about prominent Chinese : one remembers Chiang Kai-shek's Bible, and Mme Chiang's flair for silk gowns.

No : what is important about the Chinese Communists is not that they are human beings and often oddly attractive ones ; but that they form as a body an extremely able, experienced, independent and flexible group of Chinese leaders, with plenty of common-sense as well as Marxist theory, and with a deep instinctive understanding of the mood of their own people. They are not supermen, nor are they ' Red bandits ': but they are very capable military commanders and administrators, and so far, at least, they have shown themselves personally incorruptible. They are certainly not dependent upon Russia or upon anyone else for advice ; and if the precedent of Sian is valid, they can be counted upon to take the long view in any settlement of a crisis and to put the interests of China as a whole before interests of party or class.

The leaders of the ' People's Liberation ' movement are Communists, of course, if that much-abused word has any meaning outside of Russia : and it is both absurd and dangerous to pretend that they are anything else. But their historical importance at the moment is that they are the spearhead of one of those great mass movements that from time to time, over the centuries, have always been decisive in effecting any dynastic change in China. Their immediate objective is the consolidation of the national bourgeois-democratic revolution : this is something that is long overdue, and that should seem desirable from the point of view of most foreign nations, as well as from that of the majority of Chinese. For this movement today, as for Borodin more than twenty years ago, two words—' good government '—are almost a sufficient platform : certainly China has had enough government

of another kind. And it seems that the Communists are prepared to co-operate with all but the extreme feudal-militarist groups opposed to them.

The degree of lasting success with which the 'Liberators' may meet in their efforts at stabilization in North China will depend very largely on the attitude of the outside world to their new regime. At present, the Communists are much more anxious for foreign trade and investment than the Kuomintang has ever been since 1945. A blockade or a boycott by the West might well throw them into a dependence on the Soviet Union that, of themselves, they would not seek. But given a fair field and no more outside interference, I am convinced that, with the cooperation of the Left Kuomintang and the middle parties that have been squeezed out of the picture for so long, they can work out a more satisfactory Chinese solution to China's most urgent problems than anybody else.

John Kelly

For Ever and Ever

ROCKY could remember the night his father brought the shotgun home. Old Mr Parr had given it to him.

'Yes,' said his father. 'It's out in the shed, says the old boy, never been put together. You can have it if you like. It makes me nervous having the thing around.'

Big-eyed, Rocky and his brother looked over their porridge spoons at the great shining barrels as the shotgun stood in the corner.

'Never been used,' said his father. 'I'll take it out after those rabbits this afternoon. Get on with your breakfast, you kids.'

The two young heads stooped again to their plates. But from the corner of his eye, Rocky saw the shotgun, the gleam of the steel, the smoothness of the dark-polished butt.

When Dad came home that evening he brought two rabbits. They swung limp and grey from his left hand. In his right he carried the gun, its muzzle dipping and swaying as he came over the stile in the orchard. The boys ran down through the rank grass, under the moss-boughed apple-trees to meet him. Rocky picked a rabbit up by the ears. It flopped over his hand, still warm, white belly-fur dark-stained where the shot had struck. Two drops of blood stood in its nostrils. Its little calloused, black-nailed paws stuck out stiffly and it dribbled slowly down Rocky's faded khaki shorts.

'Hold it by the hind legs, son,' said his father. Standing under the trees, solid and square, strong, he broke the gun. Bright red, the empty shells lay in his big palm. Dropping the dead rabbit, the boy dived after the tossed-aside treasures, rolled them in his hands, crimson and bright brass. The biting smell of fresh-burnt gun-powder stung his nostrils.

'Can I have the cartridges, Dad?'

Always, after that, on Saturday afternoons, he carried the gun to the stile for his father, ran his hands over the cold oiled smoothness of the barrels, the warm varnish of the stock.

'Now you, Roger, you're not to go, mind. I don't trust those things.'

'When you're older, son. It'd knock you flat at present.'

So the big shot-gun stood in the corner and the boy looked at it over his porridge plate, and the little heap of red shell-cases grew, under the corner of the house.

It was years until that day when at last he climbed the stile with the gun and felt its weight drag his shoulder down.

'The boy's got to learn to use a gun sometime.'

He stood careless before the admiration of his young brother.

Rocky went rapidly down the slope behind the orchard. He cut over through the young gorse that had come up since the big burn. Once out of sight of the house he stopped, broke the gun, and held it up to the sun. The twin bores twisted away from him in a dazzle of light. He snapped the gun to, and pressed down on one of the hammers. It came back slowly, heavily, and clicked into place. Rocky squinted along the barrels. The tiny brass bead-sight winked back the sunlight. He lowered the hammer, felt for the three cartridges that weighed down his pants' pockets. Then his excitement burst in a wild run that carried him past the jutting

edge of gorse, over the little gully, up to the pine-ridge. There he flung down on the tussock.

The country ran out before him, ridge after ridge, dipping to the railway and the dark green of the far-off swamp. Scrub was reclaiming the grass-land. Even where he lay in the short grass, curled dwarf bracken was harsh under his elbows. Down in the hollows and along the sagging fences, gorse bloomed in clotted patches of yellow. That was the Viponds' farm over there. Look at it now. Smothered. They say Mr Vipond's doing well in the city now. Jack Wilson ran into him at Easter. Gorse and blackberry.

Rocky lay in the grass and sighted along the barrels. A bumble-bee swayed heavily up a grass-stem a few feet away, buzzing angrily. The boy rolled over, squinted carefully along the gun and squeezed the uncocked trigger. The bee struggled up the stem and zoomed briefly away. The pines moved steadily along against the sky.

Rocky first knew that the hawk was there when a shadow swooped down over the ridge, along the ragged edges of the gorse-patches. He screwed up his eyes against the glare of the sun. Yes, there he is. Floating. Look at him now. Funny how they go so long without moving their wings. No effort. Wonder how high he is.

The shadow came up over the bracken, flicked past the pines and down the slopes again. Steady the hawk swung in the air, silent and watchful. Circling, he soared, wings unmoving. Up the slope came the shadow. He hung motionless, lower now. Rocky crouched in the grass. An easy wingstroke, and the bird wheeled above the pines, hesitated, and slid again down the long slope to the gorse-patch. Upwind to the pines, down to the gorse, sweeping in great circles against the ambling clouds. Then a faltering, a plummetting speck, and as the boy rose to his knees, gun in hand, so the bird was gone.

Rocky was on his feet, racing downhill to the scattered gorse. The first ridge it was. A rabbit, a stoat. Let me be there in time. The gun was heavy in his hot palm as he ran. Up the short slope, on your knees in the scrub fern. He crawled to the top of the ridge and peered over. Just beyond was a dip. The hawk had struck a hare. He stood on it, both feet gripping. Rocky could see his thick yellow legs. The bird was nervous, his head up, hook-beaked, anxious. He fluttered off a short way, wheeled, flew back

and dropped again, jealous of his kill. His tail clamped down as he gripped and settled. He shuffled as he folded his wings. Quite small, he looks, now. The hawk dropped his head and struck again at the hare. Silently Rocky broke the gun, slid the shells from his pocket, red and heavy. The little copper caps were smooth and rounded. He peered again through the bore. Clean and clear, yes. In with the cartridges. Press them home. The gun felt different as he closed it. Alive now. He pressed on the hammers. They were stiff and his hand trembled. He lowered the gun and lay with his face pressed to the ground.

When he looked up, the hawk was feeding, clutching the hare with one foot, tearing the fur from its belly with the other. Rocky wriggled closer. Tense, he pulled back the hammers. At the click the hawk looked up, swivelled its head, stared, haughty. Curious, it shook out its wings, changed its mind, gripped on the carcase. Rocky rose to his knees. The hawk sprang into the air, wings beating, swung away out of the dip. And the boy lifted the gun, sighted, jerked on the triggers. The big gun jolted back against his shoulder, his ears rang with the blast. On his feet now, he broke the gun, jerked the shells out on to the ground. As he blew slowly down the bore, the smoke drifted down over the yellow gorse-bloom. He stared down into the dip. The hawk, one wing smashed, fluttered and threshed in a narrow circle.

Rocky ran down into the hollow. The bird was on its feet, one wing raised, the other trailing. It hissed at him, beak open, curved, savage. Yellow eyes flamed up at him. He swung the gun by the barrels, wildly. The butt caught the bird fairly, on the head, and toppled it, dead, into the grass. For a moment Rocky crouched beside the hawk, then he caught it by a wing and lifted it. The open eyes glared still, but the plumage was ruffled now, the great wings dragged. He ran his thumb over its head, felt the flick of the stiff feathers brushing his hand.

When Rocky climbed back over the stile his father was patching up the feeding-stalls for the calves. Hammer in hand, he watched his son come through the orchard. The big gun gleamed in the late afternoon sunlight.

'Well son, how'd you get on? Get anything? A hawk, eh. Good shooting. On the wing? Hey, Jim, come and have a look at this.'

But the younger boy was already lifting the gun, carrying it

back to the house, eyeing the dead bird.

'Well, mother,' said the man, as they came in at the back door. 'Looks as though we've got a marksman on our hands.' He grunted as he eased himself down on to the step and tugged at his bootlaces. 'Out every day now, eh? Be no stopping you now.'

The boy said nothing as he stood the gun back in its corner. He wiped his hands slowly down the back of his faded shorts.

'No,' he said then. 'No, I s'pose not.'

Outside, a little chill wind had got up, and the shadows were creeping up the gullies.

Lorna Clendon

Four Poems

THE MISTS ARE RISING

THE mists are rising
And a cool breeze from the sea
Blows on my face ;
It will soon be daylight ;
I will get up and go on again
Towards the country beyond the headland.

Last night I stopped by this bush,
Lay down on this grass and these stones,
And the moon, lighting the clouds
Which passed overhead,
Showed me strange shapes
That leaned inward, leaned from the sea.

And so time passed ; time passed
Until there was no moon
And silence and darkness remained
Hour after hour . . .

I lost all knowledge of time and place ;
Once I clutched a branch of the tree
But it faded too ;
I had no memory after that.

Much later, I know not how long,
A whisper touched me from some twilight land
And then just for a moment I fancied
A wind stirred.

The numbness will soon be gone ;
The mists are rising
And a cool breeze from the sea
Blows on my face ;
I will get up presently and go on
Towards the country beyond the headland.

HE LIES WHERE HE HAS FALLEN

He lies where he has fallen
Among the decaying logs
Among the fallen leaves ;
The greenness of the trees is overhead,
The trunks are black with rain.

He could not escape the shingle-slides above
Nor pass the gorge below ;
He had no pack nor gun to hamper speed,
Nor coat for him to be indifferent
To the rain ;
But his spent muscles
Could not check the stumbling feet.

All this is no concern of his ;
The leaping flames
That yesterday consumed his hours
Today will never burn for him ;
He lies where he has fallen
And in his eyes the sparks of hope and fear
Fade slowly as the mists descend.

He does not move ;
Only the eyes
Fixed on the forms of trees
Absorb the black and green,
And as they wait for the oncoming night
The stream flows past beside.

OPEN COAST

Now we have made the tricky descent
Through the half-light ;
Successfully left the cliffs above,
Left the city secure beneath its haze.

Against this slight shore of shingle
The sea runs swiftly ;
But sea-gulls live here,
Rising and floating beyond the cliff-tops.

We build a fire ;
Through the smoke I see you,
The spirit of the quick,
Your face unconscious and intent
Is veiled and unveiled before my eyes.

From here we can see the troughs and crests,
And the innumerable cross-currents,
Hear the resounding roar
Upon the boundaries of human kind.

The thoughts of wisdom from past ages
Return in dignity,
Return once more into their own,
And for an instant at the cave-mouth
Our hearts are held by peace and awe.

EARLY MORNING

The light walls and the window-sill
Warm with the early sun
Are what I remember now,
More than the way you looked.

The cool air came in from the garden ;
No one else was awake ;
In the quietness we drank coffee
And I sat on the window-sill
Watching young clouds fade in the sun.

Our thoughts fled away to lonely private places
And returned again to the present
To meet with gladness
The sunlight and cups.

This seems sweeter to me
Than all the desires and hopes of the evening
And indeed in the swirling mists of this world
Is the only shape I can see.

Theo Schoon

The Waitaki Valley

THAT these photographs happen to convey something of the atmosphere of North Otago is merely a coincidence, for they were taken chiefly for their historical value, as showing the location of various ancient rock shelters whose walls were decorated by the early inhabitants of New Zealand.

Though I value the camera as the recording instrument par excellence, I find its limitations irksome when they force me to make a choice of one aspect only—the most significant one—of a scene, whereas painting permits the inclusion of all that the painter considers essential ; in one picture, that is, greater accuracy may be achieved through inaccuracy.

These photographs show various aspects of the Waitaki river where it has cut its way in crisp turquoise and white through barren plains and deep narrow gorges of an unchanging sombre

brown. The unusual clearness of the air gives equal sharpness and prominence to things near and far, causing one to misjudge distance and falsifying one's sense of colour and form in a most disconcerting way. Real and unreal strike the senses with the same force, and, under a sky whose deep blue becomes an obsession, lend this country strange compulsion.

Often I seemed to walk several miles one way or the other without seeing any difference in the landscape, while some prominent landmark might vanish suddenly when I turned my back for a moment. Only the plaintive cries of paradise duck break the vast silence that hangs over everything, where the faint drawings in the shelters seem to be fading away into the earth and rocks. Here and there some stone club or edged flake or adze, worn and polished by the sand, lies forgotten among the porous crumbling bones and dazzling white quartz crop-stones of the giant moa.

Note: The plates appear between pages 32 and 33.

Bruce Mason

Summer's End

I

WHEN John's mother asked him why he didn't go out and play like other boys, he had no answer. He just didn't want to, he said, he was all right here with his book. He felt a tiny shame struggling in him as he said it, and when she persisted he was angry and all he would say was that he just didn't want to. She would look at him then, troubled, and say, ' Well, really, it does seem a shame to have a lovely beach at your back door and not to use it. You're ten years old now, double figures. Nearly eleven. Look at your brother Ted. He's always outside. He'll be bigger than you soon.'

He said he didn't care. Why did she have to come round like this, asking questions that made him feel ashamed? He was all right, quite all right, thank you. And on Saturday afternoons when

Ted played football and his mother and father went along to watch, he would sneak a shilling from his money box and say he was going for a nice long walk. They would look at him, doubtfully, but they couldn't say it wasn't exercise, and off he went, along the beach, up to the Strand and round the corner to the old Gaiety. There, when the lights went down, he would feel free and safe, lost in this rich gloom where no one could see him to nag about fresh air and growing boys. It might be Janet Gaynor or Norma Shearer, and once it was Greta Garbo. How he suffered! He wriggled in delicious agony at their distress, and felt the smart of tears when they were happy. And how he felt for poor Greta Garbo when, dressed in hunting clothes, she was almost forced to share a room with another man! If only he could have told her, look, here is one who could understand. Then the lights would come on again and he would grope out, head down, afraid to meet someone who would pimp on him. And when he came home, the others would all be talking about the football and his mother with a quick glance at him would ask where he had been. ' Oh,' he would say, ' Castor Bay,' or ' Round the Lake '; ' Milford'; he used them in turn. And once he heard his father say : ' That boy's not healthy. Long walks by himself and ten years old, it's not healthy.' Later at dinner he would ask about the football, and if Ted had scored a try, so that for a little while they would think he was a real boy.

Then one Saturday, his money box was empty, and this time when he said he was going for a walk, it had to be a walk. He made for the rocks at the end of the beach. It was a grey day, and the tide was in. He had to crawl along a narrow ledge until he came to the Devil's Mouth, a deep bowl where the water was never free of scum. You had to jump from the ledge on to a spur of rock shaped like a flattened ice-cream cone, and once there, a huge leap took you to the other side. There was no one round to put him off, and he landed neatly, bent at the knees and bounced up again. Round the corner with care, because the ledge had broken away and the root in the cliff you swung round on was working loose, and there were the King and Queen, like squashed pillars he thought, and lonely with no one to swim out and dive from them. But that wouldn't be until the summer.

Now the track broadened onto a wide terrace of rock, and just ahead of him was the green staircase, hanging right down the

cliff. If he leaned right back, he could just see the notice on the gate at the top saying 'Beware of the Dog.' No one he knew had ever been up it, and he had never seen anyone pass through the gate and descend. It was the Atkinson's place, but they were too old now, he supposed, to risk falling on to the rock. Two of the steps had fallen through since last summer. His heart began to move faster. Should he go up? Why not? The dog, though. An Alsatian, he had heard. Oh well. It would never follow him down the steps. It might even like him.

He began the ascent, holding on to both rails. Half way up he came to a gap in the steps. A miss would shoot him straight to the rocks. His chest felt suddenly bulgy as though part of his stomach were there. Go back? There would be no one to spy on his retreat. Then why retreat? He felt suddenly bold, masterful. He would carry on. Let them come and watch! Let them! He was going on. He put one foot very firmly on the step behind, arched the other leg and carefully straightened it, like the hurdlers in slow motion he had seen on the newsreel. His foot touched the step above, he pulled with his arms on the rails, and he was there. He was soon at the top, and stood now with the tingly joy of one on forbidden ground.

He looked around him. This had once been a rock garden, but was sorely neglected, he decided. He stumbled through a jungle of raureka and gorse which stabbed at his bare arms and legs. There was a clearing ahead where two paths met: he'd better be careful here. He emerged into the light, cautiously. Oh yes—there was the Atkinson's house, enormous and forbidding in white stonework. But there were no windows open and most of the curtains were drawn. Away? Still, he'd better keep off that path, just in case.

He followed another which took him down into a shallow gully and up again on to a flat piece scooped out of the cliff. And there to his surprise stood a little house, ringed in huge clumps of wild broom. No, an old bach, he amended when he came closer, a tumbledown whare. But what a find! He felt prickly with excitement and rubbed his hands up and down his pants. Well, he thought, well.

Softly he stepped on to the porch. Boards were broken here and there and it was covered with dirt and a mulch of soft leaves. In front was the sea, flat and blank as a dull, grey plate. A single

ship moved on it, idly. As he stood silent, rapt, a thin breeze stole round him and the swelling pods gave a little dry shiver.

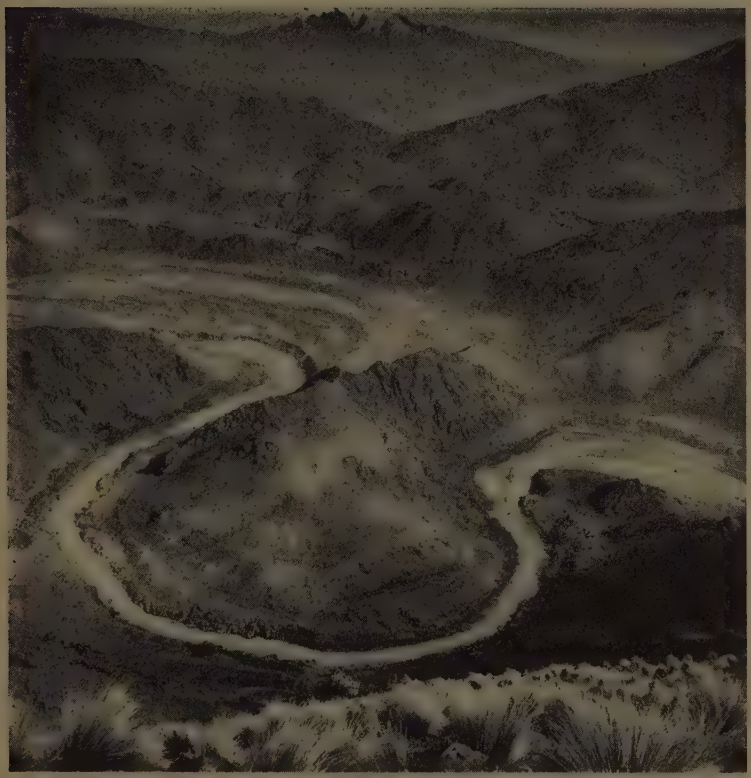
He turned from the sea and looked again at the bach. A door and two windows. One gaped at him sightless, without glass or sash, crossed boards nailed from the inside. The other, though paned, could tell him nothing, hooded by years of cobwebs and dust. Now for the door. He took a pace towards it, but the sharp click of his heels jarred on him. Tiptoes or nothing here, he felt. He pushed it gently, and it held him, muttering. Again, and with a shuddering creak, it yielded, and he was in. For a moment he could see nothing, and the thick dust sprang away from his shoes in soft arcs.

Now he could see. An old tin chimney at the back, with a few charred twigs in the grate. A table and a battered chair under the good window, and a dusty magazine on the floor, open, as though someone had just left off reading it. He bent down to pick it up. A *Woman's Mirror* of Christmas three years before, with the cover and two or three pages torn off. As he straightened up with it, a sharp stench filled his nostrils and there under the magazine was a little heap of dried excrement with the missing pages beside it. He dropped the magazine hastily with a grimace of disgust. Honestly, he said aloud, really. Some people. Then he remembered the time he had been caught like this near Mrs James', but she was out and he had to do it in her washhouse. Still, that had been urgent.

He could see much better now. Behind him the light was feeling its way into a place long the preserve of gloom. The wind stirred again and grudgingly the door swung open a little more. A band of light shot through to the chimney and illumined the blackened sticks in the grate with a shiny white glow. Particles of dust jostled, spun and danced in the light. He shivered and a feeling of awe crept over him.

He had seen enough. He wanted to think about it now, build it again in his mind. He tiptoed out, closed the door softly, ran along the path, heedless through the gorse, down the green staircase to the rocks and the beach, along the hard sand where the sea had run back and up to the house. He found the key, let himself in, and fell on to his bed.

And now he seemed to be there again, keeping a lonely vigil on the porch, staring calmly and wisely out to sea, past Rangitoto,



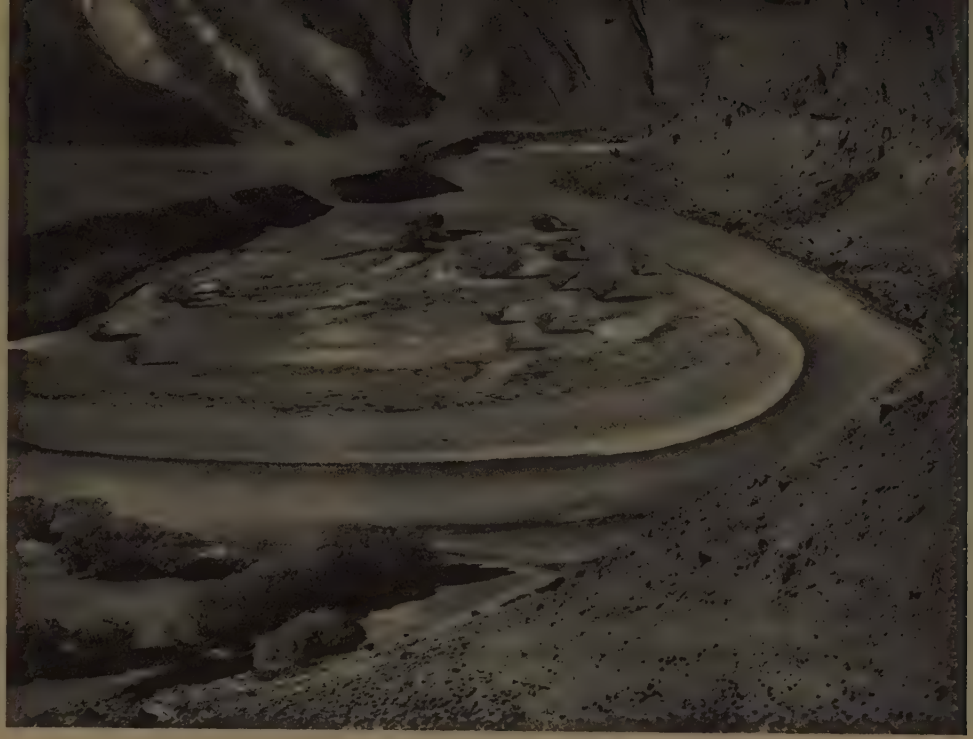
Black Jack's Point, Waitaki River

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THEO SCHOON

The Earthquakes, Duntroon

Gooseneck Bend, Waitaki River

Ahuriri River, near its junction with the Waitaki



Gooseneck Bend, Waitaki River

Shepherd's Creek, Waitaki River

past the Great Barrier, past everything. Frail ghosts emerged from a mist to gaze briefly at him, then faded, heartened and impressed. He turned and went in, shutting the door. He picked up a book, read perhaps two lines and laid it down, smiling a little wearily. Then he sharpened his pencil, and wrote and wrote and wrote . . .

A knock. Visitors? A voice shouted 'Here he is!' and a gust of rude force swept over him. He opened his eyes and there was Ted, filthy, triumphant, the real boy. They were home. 'He's in here, sleeping or dreaming or something,' called Ted, and left to wash. John got up quickly and went to the book case, pulled out *The Water Babies* and turned its pages hurriedly. His mother came in.

'Well, dear, where have you been?'

'Round the rocks,' he said casually. A name he had never heard before appeared suddenly in his mind. 'I met Bob Harnett.'

'Oh, I'm glad you found a friend. Is he in your class?'

'Oh no. Higher.'

'A nice boy?'

'Yes. He's all right.'

'Why don't you bring him here sometimes? We like to see your friends, you know.'

This had to be ended quickly.

'I don't think you'd like him. He's a bit common.'

'Oh.' His mother was uneasy. 'I hope you won't be a prig, John.'

He saw again that maddening solicitous look on her face. He just had to make her forget Bob Harnett.

'Mother, you know the Atkinsons?'

'Yes, dear.'

'Well, their house is all shut up.'

'Yes, they're away.'

'Where have they gone?'

'Oh, the old man was getting very rheumaticky, I heard, and they've gone down to Rotorua for the baths.'

'How long for?'

'I don't know. Why?'

'Oh, nothing. I just wondered.'

The telephone rang and she left him. He did not look at his

book again. He thought of the bach, and it seemed to glow faintly in his mind, like a distant jewel.

II

When John woke, a grey light was entering his room. Why was he so excited? Oh, yes. He must get up, now. The house was quiet. He levered himself over the creaking mattress and landed on the floor with no more than a little thud. Still quiet. He dressed quickly and crept down the hall. A voice. Stop. Mother. She said : 'Oh, no, no, no, no,' in the low scratchy tone she had when she was tired. Talking in her sleep again. On a few steps and he was in the kitchen. There was the long-handled broom. He took it and made for the door, unlocked it silently, glancing back at the clock. Quarter past six. He had to be back by eight o'clock when his father came to make the tea. He slipped out, down the winding path, past the big karaka tree and on to the beach.

The sand near the gate was cold and soft like the fur of the kitten washed up in the Easter storm. Further down where the sea had run back it was hard and there might be football later. Well, he wouldn't be there. And he wouldn't be where people could ask him why he wasn't playing football either. No, he wouldn't be there. He gave a sudden shout of laughter.

It seemed to lift him from the ground and buoyed him along the beach. Over the rocks again, up the steps, gorse, gully, and there it was. 'Little bach, little bach, I'm here again,' he said aloud. Then stricken, he looked in the broom for the mocking eyes peering at him, faces ready to crease into smirks, and destroy him with harsh brays of glee. But the broom just rustled gently, and a dried pod fell at his feet. Silly, silly, he said to himself.

On to the porch. The door was ajar, and as he approached it, it creaked open a little more. A thin tremor of excitement shook him. He was expected, he was welcome. He breathed in, pushed the door, and took possession of his own. Dear oh dear, he thought. Really it did look too awful in the light of early morn. Action, that was the thing now. He began to sweep with wide, violent threshes. Dust billowed over him and he coughed. His broom, lunging behind the chimney, left a large spider crucified on a strand of web. Before the broom could descend again, the spider ran down

its tenuous lifeline and found the hospitable gloom of the charred twigs in the grate. John banged the twigs two or three times, but it was a token brutality—he didn't like spiders, but he didn't want to kill one, either. Not like that rough brother of his whom he had seen yesterday casually tearing up a moth. 'Little gutter-snipe,' he had said, knowing it was the wrong word, yet needing something to express the superiority he felt before a violence he need not fear. 'Oh, shut up, you . . . you . . . ya dirty louse!' Ted had shouted, suddenly enraged. And later, at lunch, John sat opposite Ted, watching him eat with the stupefied attention he had seen people giving to the animals at the zoo, then closed his eyes, shrugged, and turned to his own plate with a look of nausea just within his control. Ted, in the act of despatching another mouthful, blushed, almost choked. He knew obscurely what was happening but had no symbols to combat it. He called loudly on his mother.

'Mum! John's looking at me.'

John stared firmly at the trailing nasturtium pattern on his plate.

'No, he isn't dear. Now get on with your veges, there's a good boy.'

'He was looking at me.'

'Your brother can look at you, can't he? Now, hurry up, or there'll be no fruit salad.'

Ted relapsed, sulkily masticating his beans. John smiled, a tiny inward grin that glimmered inside his head. He had scored his try, he had potted his goal. There were other fields but football. And moreover, he thought, taking in his family with a brief glance, he had a secret that only he . . .

A voice within him called on him to stop. 'What are you mooning about there for? Get a move on, there's work to be done.' He started. Somehow this inner voice took on the vocabulary and coercive force of his father's. Yes, he admitted, there was work to be done.

He went on sweeping, making the long strokes of a batsman coming out to meet the ball. At last it was finished. He shovelled the formidable pile of dust, thick ropes of webs, and the dried husks of many generations of insects off the porch onto the long grass still glinting with dew. It lay there in a heavy wet smear. Never mind. The wind will blow it away when it dries.

He stood off and surveyed his work. The sun, just peering over the cliff, was entering unobstructed a place to which it had long been forbidden. It shone on the old tin chimney and he thought for a moment of St Peter's Church when sometimes a ray of light trickled through the twigs in Christ's crown and fell on the Reverend Thirle's balding head below. The voice prompted him again : ' Don't daydream there. Time to go. Get moving.' He acknowledged it gratefully, closed the door and ran home.

Too late, he whispered agonizedly as he ran up the path. He could hear the clink of cups in the kitchen : his father was there. What should he do? If only he hadn't mooned about so much! He crept to the back door. The milk was there, that meant his father still had to collect it, he may not even know yet that the door was unlocked. And what was he going to do with the broom? It felt about eighteen feet long. Throw it over the fence and hide? A rattle at the door. What —

James Crome appeared and saw his son sweeping frenziedly round the back door. ' Hullo, hullo, what's this? ' he said. ' You're an early bird. Helping your mother, eh? That's the boy. I was wondering why the back door was open.' He took the billy and turned towards the open door. John breathed deeply, reprieved. But his father turned as the door was closing : ' How long have you been up, son? ' John, cornered, had no time to lie. ' Since about—since—six o'clock,' he said lamely. He had tried to alter the words, but the six stuck in his mind : there it was. ' What's the matter, couldn't you sleep, boy? ' John mumbled something, tittered, and his father had gone in.

He threw down the broom, vexed. What did he want to do that for? Now his father would say John had been up over two hours and all he had done was shift a few stones from one place to another. No, he had to show something for it, or there would be more questions.

He began sweeping again. But the zest had gone. His arms and his back started to ache, and his eyes felt heavy. After a while Ted came on to the verandah in his pyjamas and watched him, astonished. ' What are you doing that for? ' he asked. ' Oh, what do you think! ' shouted John with the savage and pointless rhetoric of angry small boys. 'All right, keep your hair on,' said Ted mildly and moved off towards the beach. Soon his mother came out, looked at the yard, said : ' What a good boy. I could

eat off my back yard now,' and when she kissed him, he felt better. After all his secret was still safe. Only just, though, he said to himself. Only just.

He did not go to the bach again that day. He just mooned about, perversely enjoying it, because this time his mind was full. His mother saw him, and irritated was going to order him outside into the fresh air, but she was halted by the look of strange calm on his face. It troubled her, and she wanted to ask him what he was thinking, but she felt somehow he would not share it. All day she watched and could see no way to enter this private joy. ' He's growing up, that's what it is,' she told herself miserably in bed that night, ' Yes, he's growing up.'

III

Next day, as soon as school was over, John rushed to the bach. The afternoon sun shone in through the window and scored a bright band across the table. Good, good, he said. He opened his schoolbag, brought out a book, and placed it in the strip of light.

It was a new book from the class library, *Windsor Castle* by W. Harrison Ainsworth. What a name! The delicious mystery of that ' W '! Wallace, Wilberforce, Witherspoon—it might be anything. And the rich gurgle of Harrison when you put the ' r's ' right in the back of your throat! He said it over several times. That was a name. Look at his, now. John Crome. Boom, boom, and it was over. No name for a famous man. Why not put one in! Just a letter even. John Q. Crome. John Z. Crome. No, it wouldn't do. He'd have to change it. Paul, perhaps, or Anthony. Michael? But then he'd be Mike or Mick. Horrible!

He opened the book and began to read. Oh, this was hard, some of these words he'd never seen before, and wasn't it dry! After two pages, he felt dazed, and he stood up and stretched himself. There was always the story of course. And this was just the place to write it. He fumbled in his satchel and found a small notebook, opened it, and began reading aloud what he had written in the long, angular hand they taught him at school. It was about a little girl who lived in a large house surrounded by a high wall with spikes on it, and her mother, a monster, wouldn't let her play with the other children and there she had to stay sad and lonely, with naught but an old rag doll to comfort her. ' But one

day, as she was quietly watching the autumn leaves flutter down in red and yellow gorgeousness'—that was good, might do for the class essay on Friday—' she heard a voice call her name.' This was to be the best part, this was where the hero came in. But he hadn't a name for him yet—what should it be? Something rich, something really striking. Harry? . . . Oh no . . . Harrison? Could he? Y-e-e-s . . . Yes, Harrison ; Harrison what? . . . Ainsworth. No, definitely not. That would be cribbing. Ain . . . ain . . . Ainsley. Perfect. He started to write. ' Who calls? ' faltered the little girl. 'A friend,' said the strange new voice outside the wall.

And now, he told himself, here comes Harrison, Harrison knight-errant, on top of the wall. But how? It was a high wall, it had to be, or the little girl would have escaped long ago. A rope ladder? Why not? ' To her amazement, the little girl saw a rope ladder come snaking into the air above the wall, to catch neatly on one of the spikes. A few moments later, her staring eyes saw a fair young boy gazing down at her. " Who are you? " she breathed, pale with fright. " They call me Harrison Ainsley," he said loud and clear.'

And now what? He was stuck. What was he to do with them? Would Harrison leap down, declare himself her knight and ask to serve her? He could, of course, but it sounded a bit sissy. He had a sudden piercing sense of power over these creatures of his imagination who could move only if he bade them. If he wished, Harrison would continue to stand on top of that wall, his fearless eye meeting the timid child's below, for ever and ever, amen.

His thoughts began to drift, lulling him round idly. Harrison and Greta were still there in position, but they seemed a long way off. Suddenly they began to move despite him. As he watched, they became alarmingly active, moving up into larger focus as he became aware of them. Harrison threw down the ladder to the girl. Swiftly she climbed up, together they descended the outer wall with Harrison's firm young arm to guide her, hand in hand they raced to a bach on a cliff, surrounded by large clumps of broom, carpeted wall to wall. The girl sank exhausted on to a chaise longue and Harrison casually pressed a stud in the wall. A panel flew back, and there in shiny rows were his books. He plucked one out and began to read to her . . .

Harrison faded. Greta was extinguished. He was a little cold,

he would have to be going soon. But that panel was an idea, wasn't it? He needed somewhere to store things, had to leave some mark on the place which would make it quite his own. Where could he hide anything? The chimney. He walked over to it. Corrugated iron sheets. One seemed to be loose, he noticed. He pulled it gingerly and it came away in his hand. He peered into the dim cavern he had opened. Put a board on those two ledges there, that would make a shelf, put the iron back, and hey presto!

There were some strips of wood lying in front of the bach, he remembered. He selected one, tried it, and gave a little grunt of satisfaction. It fitted. He placed his notebook there, *Windsor Castle*, a tattered copy of Grimm's *Fairy Tales* he had brought from home, back with the piece of corrugated iron, and there was the chimney, again bland and prosaic, no hint of the treasures within. The thought pleased him.

The sun quite suddenly slipped right off the table and made a little pool at his feet. He consulted an imaginary watch. ' Time to go,' he pronounced. He was soon on the beach.

And now he went every day to the bach, and some of the week-end as well. His parents did not question him now when he said he was off to play with Bob Harnett, newly resurrected, and did not ask him to bring him home, either. True, they still had that uneasy look, but they were leaving him alone, and did not want to know where he had been or what he was doing. Though once, when he set off along the beach he saw his father at the gate watching him, and then when he had got to the bach some prompting made him go close to the edge of the cliff, and there fifty feet below was his father cautiously approaching the Devil's Mouth. He could have spat on his head if he had dared. Instead, he went into the bach and sat there a long time, his shoulders hunched right up, giggling. And there were no questions that day, either. He felt almost safe.

His money box was getting heavier, too. For how could that stuffy, grubby little theatre take the place of his enchanted cliff top eyrie? What chance had Greta Garbo or Claudette Colbert against the shining creatures of his imagination? What chance had his family, even? They had diminished lately ; Ted, Mum and Dad were shadowy figures who sat next to him at meals, and sometimes raised their voices, but Harrison and Greta? These were people, warm, living things who danced joyously

down the golden groves of his mind. At this stage, Harrison was still showing Greta the glories of a world she had never known, and she was chronically spellbound. The Gorgon, Greta's mother, was still biding her time. But wait till she heard of her daughter's secret trysts! 'Trysts' he had learned about from *Windsor Castle*. For he was well into it now. The Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt, poor hapless man, that awful hooded Wolsey and Henry VIII : swaggering and coarse but likeable—all these inhabited his mind as people, and as for Herne the Hunter—well! He couldn't read his name without a shiver which kept him reading, tensely until the print blurred and swam. Sometimes when the sun was gone, the shadows round the door seemed to shift and press about him, and once he was sure he saw a pair of antlers outside the window, and waited, fearful, for the 'hideous lineaments of the dread hunter' to appear. Galloping hooves pounded through his sleep, and once he saw Herne himself on a huge snorting black horse, galloping wildly along the beach, following a little, flying figure. Poor kid, poor kid! But with a shock he knew who it was. It was him, John! Oh, heavens! And as soon as he knew, he was no longer watching it, he was in it, and there was Herne after him, giving chase. Round the rocks, up the stairs, and still the terrible horse and rider came on. There was the bach, surely Herne would not follow him there. He rushed in, shut the door and threw himself against it. But horse and rider shot through the window, halted, and Herne jumped down and rushed to the chimney, tore it open, rifled the manuscripts, tearing them to pieces and what was he doing now, oh help! He was feeding them to his horse! And the awful thing munched them with what he could see was a horribly avid relish—goodbye Harrison, farewell Greta! Then Herne turned on him and came closer, closer, and the antlers seemed to go right through the roof and up to the stars! He screamed, screamed, screamed, and there was his mother shaking him. 'John! John! she said, 'You've woken the whole house!' But that had been a week ago, and still there had been no questions. He didn't talk about his nightmare and his mother just said she'd keep him off fish in the evenings for a while.

Yes, he felt safe. He was learning, in some shadowy way he could neither comprehend nor define, what it meant to be fulfilled and at rest.

IV

One Sunday morning when summer was near, John was up early, and met the sun outside showing a rim above the pale sea. Should he go to the bach now, or later? He decided now, because his mother had said something about cutting the lawns for sixpence a pop, and he'd need to be back soon.

Beach, rocks, steps. How well he knew them now. He stood a moment on the steps. The tide was coming in, and the King and Queen would probably hold an audience later in the day. He picked up a stone and threw it. It bounced on the King and flew on to the Queen. A cannon off the cush, he told himself exhilarated, and turned in through the gate.

What was that? He stopped. A dog—wasn't it? Wasn't that a bark like—could it be—an Alsatian? He listened. Quiet again. Perhaps he had just thought it—perhaps it was on the other side of the cliff, on the next beach. He went on slowly and passed into the shade of the high gorse. The shadows seemed darker now.

There was the Atkinson's house, a large white shape in the corner of his eye. Was it opened up or not? He tried to look at it, but could not. He didn't want to know. Down into the little gully, and up to—oh, crikey. Look, look! His brain seemed to shout at him. A thin wisp of smoke was escaping in a strangled kind of way from the chimney. Someone was there!

For a moment, he stood paralysed. Despair gnawed at him. This was the end, then. But why now, why today? With no warning at all? No answer.

He walked slowly up to the porch. The gaping window was covered by a strip of sacking—a tenant! He'd have to try the other window. He moved on cautiously. As he came level with the door, it burst open, and a figure backed out spluttering, followed by a cloud of smoke. John stood quite still, with that tight feeling in his chest.

The smoke cleared, and the two of them were left on the porch, staring. John was looking at the thinnest man he had ever seen, wearing old drill pants and a dirty white bathing top with one strap hanging loose. And the face—golly, this face—was Herne the Hunter's. Long, whitish, with two bulbs of eyes that stared not at him but restlessly about, grey bristly hair, and a thin mouth full of broken teeth. John waited for the antlers to burst

out of his head. Nothing happened, and length Herne spoke.

'Hello, boy. Who are you?'

John said nothing. Resentment flared into anger.

'What are you doing here?' he suddenly shouted.

The man did not reply, but showed his teeth in a half grin.

'Who said you could live here?' he asked again, truculently.

'They did.' The man waved towards the big house.

'Are they—the Atkinsons back?' asked John in a small voice.

'Bet your life,' he said.

'But this is my bach, my bach,' said John, almost in tears.

'No, no, laddie, I live here now. Come on, now, tell me, what's your name?'

Sulkily, John told him, then asked his, out of politeness, nothing else.

'I'm Firpo,' said the man. John stared at him. He sounded just like Mr Thirle saying, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'

'Firpo what?'

'Just Firpo.'

A pause. 'Have you been here before then, young Johnny?'

Young Johnny. All the bad words he knew bubbled around and tried to come out. But all he said was, 'Yes.'

'Then perhaps you'll tell me how to work this chimney. I'm half smoked already.'

John looked into the bach. It was full of a swirling grey mist. He could hardly see the chimney. Then, with a sudden shock he knew why it wasn't working. With a shout of rage, he rushed in, ripped off the corrugated iron, and there were his treasures, the shelf almost burned through, *Windsor Castle* a charred lump, and the exercise book with his precious story just gone, vanished into cinders. 'Look,' he shouted. 'Look what you've done!' Trembling, he held up *Windsor Castle*, and a badly singed Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. 'You—you . . .' He didn't dare say it but rushed on to the porch, sobbing loudly. A moment later, he felt a hand on his shoulder. He shook it off. It returned, and he let it stay.

'Laddie, laddie, Firpo didn't know. How could he?'

John heaved, dry sobs choking him.

'I was here. This was my bach. I cleaned it up. Now it's all burnt up, all gone.'

The hand flipped up and down on his shoulder. 'That's a real shame, laddie, a real shame. But it's not your bach really, is it?'

John didn't answer. His chest gave a sudden gasping heave.

'You'll write your story again. It'll be better next time, you see if it won't.'

The shaking shoulders quietened, stopped. John looked at him.

'You talk like my mother. She's English.'

'Well now, is that so? So was my mater. Shake on it.' They did so, solemnly. John felt better.

'And now, what about breakfast? Shall we see about that? Shall we?'

John gave a little cough, half sob, half laugh. 'All right,' he said.

Firpo stood aside, and John led the way into the bach. The smoke had found its proper outlet and had almost dispersed. On the grate was a plate of pipis, badly scorched. 'That was to have been Firpo's breakfast.'

John eyed him furtively. Why did he talk as if Firpo was someone else? He felt a little uneasy.

'Who are you?' he said again, as if he hadn't heard the first time.

The man stood up. 'Firpo's the name,' he said, and scrabbled down again among the pipis. A funny cuss, a queer bird, thought John, his father's phrases coming readily into his mind.

A swish of grass and a quick padding sound. The dog. John shrank back, fearful. Firpo had heard it too. He stood up and stared at the door, and to John he seemed to grow smaller as he watched. He stood by the chimney and one hand came slowly forward as if to repel something.

A huge dog leapt into the bach, and stood there, legs spread sniffing. Then it rushed to Firpo, and with a sidewise roll, put its paws on his shoulders and with a great, dripping tongue, began to lick at his face. Firpo staggered, but did not move his eyes from the door. There was a quick, firm step on the porch, and into the doorway stepped a big, middle-aged woman. 'Down, Bruno, down,' she commanded, and the dog sheepishly subsided. She's older than Mother, John thought. And very flash, too, he noted, with her tight grey dress and the red things on the front. She advanced. The dog slunk over towards John, slily.

'Well, Tim?' she said to Firpo. 'Getting settled in?'

The dog whined slightly, she turned, and seemed to see John for the first time.

'Bless my soul,' she said, 'Who's this?'

John felt no warmth in this face looking at him.

'I'm John Crome,' he said uneasily, and to ward off the question he knew would follow: 'I live along the beach,' and waved his hand vaguely.

'Oh, I know. Young Crome. Know your mother. And what are you doing here?'

He said nothing.

'Well?' she said a little sharply. 'You're trespassing, you know.'

Firpo found his voice. In a strained, small tone he said: 'He cleaned the place up for us.'

'So you've been here before, eh?'

'Yes,' said John. I don't like you. I don't like you. The words hammered in his brain.

'I see.' She turned back to Firpo. 'Well, Tim. I've got the stretcher patched up for you. Come and get it later, will you? I'm giving you three blankets. That should be enough. And now, Master Crome. It's very kind of you to sweep this dirty place out. But we can't have any more trespassing here. Do you understand?'

John nodded, miserably. He didn't care now. She turned to go.

'You'd better be off home, young man. Your mother will be wondering where you are,' and calling the dog, she left. Firpo breathed deeply and seemed to revive. He looked through the door with a blank face. John watched him for a moment.

'Why did she call you Tim?' he asked, curiously.

'You heard her, didn't you?' said Firpo. 'She said go home.'

'Is your name Tim?' asked John again.

'Go on, get out,' said Firpo, suddenly savage, and giving John a shove, sent him reeling towards the door.

'Oh, all right, if that's the way you feel. But you don't have to be rude about it.' John moved to the door with all the hauteur he could muster. He glanced back as he was going out.

'Goodbye,' he said uncertainly. The man was still standing by the fireplace, looking out above his head. His lips began to twitch.

'Firpo. That's me. Firpo.' John ran out, suddenly scared, down tracks, steps, rocks, for the last time. The last time. The two long vowels clanged mournfully in his mind.

Breakfast was nearly over when he got back. He sat down

without a word. ' Well,' said his father, ' What have you got to say for yourself? '

He made no reply, and bent over his stewed prunes. His mother looked at him, troubled.

' We know where you've been, John. Mrs Atkinson has been on the phone. She's coming to see me this morning. She said you'd been trespassing on her place. Is that true? '

Leave me alone.

' Come on, boy,' said his father. ' Speak up.'

John could feel Ted's eyes on him, a look of knowing innocence on his face. Did he have to reveal his private world to that little tyke? His mother saw his stricken face and divined the cause. ' Go outside, Ted.' There was a wail of protest. ' Outside,' she repeated firmly. 'At once! Jump up, now.' Ted left, grumbling. Why all this fuss? He tried to sort it out for a moment, ran down to the beach, and forgot it.

His father spoke. ' Now then, John. We want to know all about this.'

May Crome frowned and shook her head at him. He ignored it, and spoke sharply.

' Now look here, May,' he said, ' I want to get to the bottom of it. This boy's been telling us lies, and he may have got us into trouble with this tabby. We want the truth, now.'

His mother glared and turned to her son.

' Do you feel like telling us, John,' she said gently. John tried to meet his mother's compassionate eyes, and could not. His lips trembled, and for a moment he saw them through a film of tears.

' Oh, for God's sake,' said James Crome irritably. ' We're not going to hurt you. There's nothing to be afraid of.'

' Pull yourself together, John. Just tell us what you can.'

Somehow the story stumbled out. But only the facts. He knew he could never communicate any of the rapture he had known in the bach. He had no words for it, no bridge to reach them.

'And this man was there this morning? ' asked his mother when he had finished.

' Yes.'

'And Mrs Atkinson found you there? '

He nodded.

' So there was no Bob Harnett at all? '

' No,' in a very low voice.

'Is that the whole story then?' It wasn't. There were the burnt books. But he wasn't going to tell them about that now.

'That's all.'

'So all you've been doing for weeks and weeks is sitting there by yourself?'

His father's voice was brusque, but not unkind. Yet how could he answer him? What could he say to throw back that 'Just sitting there'? What could he —

'Yes,' he said tiredly.

'But why didn't you tell us?' asked his father more gently.

'It was a — secret,' he said painfully, and sat back. This was all he could do. He wouldn't try any more. May Crome saw it and understood. 'All right, John. Would you like to lie down awhile?'

'Yes, please,' he said, and ran to his room. The voices followed him. With a sudden violent lunge he slammed the door and put his hands over his ears. No more, please, please, while they destroyed the world he had built, pulling down his castle stone by stone. He felt cold and weak, as if he had been emptied right out. He crept into bed. He could still hear the voices, rising and falling. He pulled the bedclothes over his head.

He must have slept, because when he opened his eyes, the sun was high in the sky. There was something going on in the living room ; he could hear his parents' voices, and another sharp, clear one which drowsily he recognized and couldn't place. It came to him. Mrs Atkinson. The voices receded. They had gone onto the porch, he decided. He slipped out of bed carefully and crept to the little dark room which gave out onto the porch. The French doors were closed, but he could hear the voices, thin and clear, as if he had earphones on. Mrs Atkinson was talking.

'Well, you see, Mrs Crome, I didn't really mind your little boy trespassing—it wasn't that at all—'

May Crome broke in nervously. 'I'm awfully sorry, Mrs Atkinson. We knew nothing about it, nothing at all.'

The thin, brisk voice hastened to reassure her. 'Oh, don't worry about that, my dear. After all, he saved us a job, cleaning the place out like that. But now, it's quite impossible. I'll tell you why. This man he met this morning is poor Tim Barlow, my sister Jane's son. She died last year, you know.' A solicitous

murmur interposed ; she spoke over it. ' He—well—frankly, he's not quite all there. Thinks he's someone else all the time, Firpo, or some such name. He's been in an asylum since his mother died, but talked of killing himself while he was there, and the authorities asked me if I could do anything. Well, after all, the last thing poor Jane asked me to do was to look after him—and —well—blood's thicker than water, don't you agree? I couldn't have him in the house—he's dirty and upsets Mr Atkinson. But he's quiet most of the time, nothing nasty about him you understand, and while the warm weather's on, I thought he'd be quite comfortable in the bach. I'm getting a man to do it out for him, and he should be all right. What I'll do with him in the winter, I can't think. Ah well, sufficient unto the day . . . But you see what I'm getting at, don't you? No fit companion for anyone really, let alone a little chap like your John.'

' Oh, quite, quite.' The Cromes spoke together.

' Well, that's all I wanted to say. Tell the little man I didn't want to scare him away this morning, but I was just a little bit alarmed when I saw him there. But—well, you understand, I know.'

The scrape of a chair. She had risen to go. John stole back. His mother's voice was asking if she would stay for a cup of tea and Mrs Atkinson was declining with thanks. He reached his bed, and pulled the clothes over him again. In a little while his mother came in.

' Well, dear, feel better now? ' He mumbled assent. She looked down at him, kindly. ' It's nearly lunch time. I've got fruit salad for you. Go and wash, now.'

There was no more chiding that day. But later, when they were watching the people walking the beach in the evening, his father called him into the bedroom. ' Now, John,' he said. ' I'm not going to say anything more about this morning. You won't go there again, you know that.' John nodded. 'All I want to ask you is to tell us what you're doing, take us into your confidence sometimes. You see what happens when you don't—we have Mrs Atkinson here. It wasn't very easy for us, I can tell you. And next time, it might be worse. So will you promise? ' John nodded again. ' Now we'll forget all about it.' He suddenly caught the boy to him and pressed him against his chest. 'And we're going to be good friends from now on, aren't we boy? ' John

wriggled a moment, sniffed the sharp tobacco smell in his father's coat, and relaxed. A warm comfort spread through him. 'Aren't we?' his father repeated. He murmured yes. He felt this might be the moment to ask the question which had been in his mind all day. He brought it out as casually as he could. 'Who was Firpo?' His father looked at him, released him. 'Firpo was a famous South American strong man,' he said. 'Now run along.'

V

Summer advanced. The sand in the week ends was too hot to walk on, and people in bright bathing suits came down and baked all day long. The Cromes held Sunday morning parties on the lawn, and sometimes didn't have lunch until half past two. The jellyfish made their annual three day visit when the sea was like a tapioca pudding and the beach in the mornings strewn with little glittering blobs that the kids threw about or dropped down one another's bathing suits. There was cricket on the beach, and this summer John joined in earnestly. He was no bowler, and couldn't throw to save himself, but he had a good straight bat and one afternoon made nineteen runs for his side. He ran up the path that day flushed and happy. His mother saw him and said: 'Well, you have had an active day, dear,' and he was pleased in a sober kind of way. This was what he wanted; no more questions, no more painful inroads on that secret territory inside his head. For a while after that day he had felt a gap somewhere, a void he could no longer fill with the rich joyous figures of the past; they wouldn't come, and anyway he didn't want them there. He was over 'all that,' he told himself. The story was never finished. Harrison and Greta were stowed away and battened down somewhere with Henry VIII, Wolsey and Herne the Hunter. He just wanted to be like the other boys, playing cricket, swimming, laughing and shouting with them to break the silences that seemed to take hold of him in the midst of a crowd, between courses at meals, or during the drawing lesson.

But every now and then, just before he went to sleep, one figure arrived in his mind unbidden, and would not be banished. The image was not clear, but the eyes were there, glaring like headlamps, and he needed no more detail to know that it was Firpo, Firpo always at bay, encircled by a strange and undefined

menace. He shrank, as he had done that awful morning, the menace seemed about to engulf him when a ringing voice bade him : Take heart, take heart, and there at the door stood his deliverer, a boy with—oh, shut up, shut up!

At other times he thought of him more consciously, and by an act of will evoked that stick-like body, all pipes, and the look of his ribs where the broken strap had exposed them, like the ridges on the sand after a storm. And this was a strong man! Behind his closed eyes, the figure would leap away from his will, the ridiculous thin arms flexed and assumed the attitude of the professional strong man, like the advertisements in the paper which told you that in a week Len Maxaldo would make a husky he-man of you. But John felt that if this man was known as Firpo, he probably was very strong. If a man's a mouse, you don't call him Samson, he reasoned, impervious at ten and a half to the possibility of irony. And it intrigued him to think of those fragile twigs of arms hoisting enormous barbells and tearing telephone directories across. It gave him a certain wayward comfort, too. John was nearly five feet tall and stringy. Ted at nearly nine was stocky and well muscled. It disturbed James Crome to see his elder son so gangly : he put it down to lack of exercise, and erected a cross bar in the bathroom. 'Do ten pull-ups every morning,' he said, 'and in a year, you'll have arms like a blacksmith's.' John did the exercises for a few mornings, and then gave up, bored. 'Who wants arms like a blacksmith's, anyway?' he asked his mother. 'I'm not going to be a blacksmith.' 'Now, dear,' said his mother, busy at the stove. But if Firpo could be a strong man without bulging, why couldn't he? He saw nothing against it.

He had not been near the bach since that Sunday. Though once when he was on the King about to dive off, he thought he saw Firpo on the top of the steps, and saw him again later, digging for pipis at low tide. And then last Wednesday, he and his mother met Mrs Atkinson in the greengrocer's shop, and in response to his mother's query in a low voice, Mrs Atkinson said in a whisper which easily penetrated to the corner where he was carefully toying with a grapefruit, that 'Oh, he was very comfortable now, really, has been so good too, helping me in the garden, grows all his own vegetables, you know, that we feel we can go away again and not have to worry about him at all.'

'Oh, so you're off again?' asked Mrs Crome.

'Yes,' she said, 'Poor Mr Atkinson is having a terrible time with his rheumatoid. The baths are the only thing that give him any relief, so we're off to Rotorua on Saturday. What? . . . Oh, we may be away some time,' the voices rose, and the conversation dissolved into trivia about the weather and the price of greens.

The Sunday after was a scorcher. The beach shimmered with heat, and all the islands in the Gulf were turned up at the edges like little boats. Yachts drifted tiredly in the channel with slack sails. The Cromes had been on the beach since nine o'clock and now at half past eleven had had five swims. John lay amongst his family and stared at the sea. When you were down, he thought, you'd think there were pools right down to the water's edge, but when you sit up, they vanish. His parents were exchanging stories with their friends in low voices and every now and then a shout of laughter told him that another had been successfully delivered. Ted was building a castle. The sun beat down with a sudden, searing intensity which was like a hot pack across the belly. John was almost asleep.

He blinked and sat up. Something was happening to the right. Crikey! There was Firpo, prancing along the beach like a mettlesome horse, his knees lifting rhythmically high in the air. He still wore the frayed bathing top and old drill pants, and the loose strap bounced wildly on his chest. A tribe of gleeful small boys followed him, prancing in unison. A wave of laughter leapt up from the sprawling bodies on the beach, and rolled along just ahead of him. John turned quickly on to his stomach and prayed tensely into the sand. 'Please don't let him see me, please, please.' The grown-ups had left off talking and there was a moment of calm before the wave reached them. It landed. John was engulfed in a sea of noisy laughter.

'Just look!'

'Who is it?'

'Oh, May, look at your Ted! Isn't he a little corker!'

John turned over abruptly at this, and saw Ted leaping down to join the mob of small boys behind Firpo. John stood up, rage filling him, forgetting that he wished to remain unseen. How dare that little rough-guts make fun of Firpo ; how dare he lay claim in this uncouth way to what was his, his, his! The pathetic concourse was almost level with them now. As Ted joined him, Firpo glanced up, saw John and stopped.

'Hello, boy!' he shouted. John sank to his knees and waved a hand feebly. What would happen now? Firpo marched towards the group arms swinging as if they were attached and no more. The half dozen little boys hung about uncertainly, wondering if the fun was over. John still on his knees in the sand felt foolish and sought a more composed posture. He fell on his back just as Firpo reached him and looked once more into the long, sad face with the shifting bulbs of eyes.

'Well, young man, why haven't you been to see Firpo, eh?'

John scrambled up. His parents and their friends were eyeing them curiously. 'Eh?' said Firpo again. John laughed nervously on a descending scale. He hoped that would do. There was a slight commotion from the grown-ups, a bit of shoving and muttered 'go ons' and James Crome came towards them with the over-earnest, solemnly intelligent look that John knew well. It told him that his father would treat all this in the spirit of broad farce which now and then broke bewilderingly into their lives—he could never quite cope with it, though Ted, seldom at a loss, was always able to answer in kind.

'Won't you introduce me to your friend, John?'

John hesitated. He couldn't say Firpo—what was his silly name? Tim . . . Tim . . . No, it had vanished. He stuttered. Firpo swelled.

'Firpo's the name,' he said. 'Firpo.'

James Crome shook him warmly by the hand. 'Welcome to our beach, Mr Firpo. This is my wife.'

Firpo bowed jerkily. 'So this is the little lady from the old country, eh?'

John flinched, appalled. Lordy, lordy. He should never have told Firpo that. It was skiting, he had known it even at the time. Firpo was piloted round the group of sedulously straight-faced sun-bathers. 'And now, Mr Firpo,' said his father, 'We see you have begun training. May we ask what for?'

'You may,' said Firpo graciously. 'Firpo's getting himself fit for the Olympic Games.'

There was a muffled explosion, a stifled gurgle of laughter. Firpo seemed not to notice. 'Oh, yes,' said James Crome without relaxing his bland politeness, 'and what events are you trying for?'

'All of them,' said Firpo, with finality.

His father came up to Firpo and again wrung his hand. ' Mr Firpo. On behalf of us all, we wish you luck. Don't we? ' he said, whipping on his friends. Smiles were hurriedly extinguished. ' Oh, yes,' they assured him, solemnly, in chorus.

' Well,' said Firpo, ' Time passes. Firpo must be on his merry way. Cheerio, one and all.' His knees jerked into their piston movement and he pranced off to where his suite of small followers was waiting. They fell in behind and off they trotted.

Pent-up seriousness collapsed under a flood of laughter. ' Oh, Jim, Jim,' gasped May Crome, ' you were dreadful, really dreadful! I thought I'd bust.'

John sat there, hating the lot of them, squawking like a lot of kookaburras. That's right, laugh your silly fat head off, ha ha ha, he thought savagely, watching Mrs Henderson having the time of her life.

Firpo was now about a hundred yards off, knees not quite so high, gait not quite so jaunty. The small boys had straggled, and after a brief consultation, dispersed. Firpo dropped into a walk, went on fifty yards more, turned and began walking back. As he neared the Crome's party again, he resumed his sprightly canter, and was greeted with faint cheers as if he were passing a saluting base. He acknowledged them with a downward wave of the hand, and a slight inclination of his long neck. Another hundred yards and he was walking again, breathing strenuously. As he reached the rocks, he stopped, swung each arm in turn in a swift lunge to his toes, then spread his arms in a wide arc which seemed to encompass the whole sea and sky, and disappeared round the rocks.

' By God, you see some funny birds round here,' said John's father. ' Poor soul,' said his mother, ' But they say people like that are very happy.'

His parents said nothing much about the incident though his father hoped that John had not been blabbing too much about them.

' Because you never know what these boobies will make of what you tell them.'

All afternoon when they were on the beach, John thought of Firpo, and how the man had looked when everyone was laughing at him. Dignified? Noble? John would not have used the words even if he had known how to. Firpo just had this disturbing presence which had conveyed itself to John and somehow just by

being had made the others laughing at him into a tribe of giggling apes. Anger followed these thoughts. What right had they to laugh, anyway? He felt ashamed for their laughter, and for himself, however unwillingly, for being included in it. Somehow he would have to make amends to Firpo. How, he did not yet know.

At school next day, his mind was made up. He would have to go to the bach and see him. After school, he made for the rocks, approaching them from the other side, so that he would not have to go home first. He climbed the staircase as if for the first time, with the same thrilling guilt he had known then. He entered the garden cautiously. The gorse had been cut, and the paths cleared. He emerged into the clearing. Yes, the Atkinsons were away all right : all the curtains were drawn and the whole house had a shrouded look. Down the gully, also cleared, and there was the bach, gleaming in a coat of green paint. The clumps of broom had grown and the yellow flowers were out so that the whole bank was a wall of rich light. He breathed deeply. ' Well, you have come on,' he said, with the fond patronage of a pioneer appraising the work of the next generation, ' yes, you really have.' He went up to the open door and looked in. Within it had changed little. A stretcher, unmade, loosely strewn with blankets, the chimney with a pile of driftwood beside it, table and chair, and a small cupboard, housing, he supposed, provisions, cooking and eating utensils. Above the bed was a picture cut from the daily papers of Len Maxaldo, a short, squat, stupid looking man with lungs clearly bulging full and arms bent to display the ugly little hillocks of muscles.

There was a sudden deep bay behind him. Oh, crikey, that awful dog again. It loped up to him eagerly, seeking a friendly word and the chance for a game. ' Down, Bruno, down,' John said nervously, ' Down, boy.' The dog looked at him, puzzled that this small stranger should know his name, decided that it must be a friend, and prepared to go into the body roll which would end with his paws on John's shoulders. John yelled, ' Firpo, Firpo! ' and backed away from this alarming affection which he was sure would knock him cold—the thing was as big as a horse. Firpo suddenly charged through the bushes, waving a hoe, wildly. ' Bruno! Bruno! Out, boy! Out! ' The dog looked uncertainly from one to the other, gave the merest suggestion of a shrug, and vanished into the bushes.

'He's harmless,' said Firpo. 'But he's big, and that keeps prowlers away.' He looked down at the small boy before him. Different from yesterday, John thought. More ordinary, quieter somehow. But he was still talking.

'Mrs Atkinson sent him over to the neighbours, they feed him, you see. But he likes me best. Don't you, Bruno?' he suddenly shouted. The dog appeared, ears back, and stood hopefully in the broom, his face framed in a cloud of yellow bells.

Firpo patted him. 'Yes, you like me, don't you, now that your tormentors have gone. She used to beat him, beat him until he was dripping,' said Firpo with a knowing look.

'Did she?' asked John, horrified. 'Oh, she shouldn't do that.'

'Oh, yes,' said Firpo with a weary smile which suggested that this was just the least of her vices. 'She's like that.'

Yes, thought John, he could believe it too, of that woman. But Firpo was looking at him.

'Why haven't you been to see me before?' he asked.

John thought a moment. 'I would be trespassing,' he said. 'I'm trespassing now.'

'Forget it,' said Firpo heartily, 'forget it. Aunt's away. She'll be away a long time. All this,' and here his arm described a full semicircle, 'it's all mine. And now, what do you think of it, eh? Has it come on?'

John agreed with enthusiasm that it had.

'And now, come this way, boy. There are things to show you.'

They went down and up the gully again, through the clearing, towards the house where John had never been before. Firpo showed him long beds of lettuce which he had been working on, the tomato house, and rows of ripening sweet corn.

'This is what I live on,' he said. What I live on, John repeated to himself. Not what Firpo lives on, what I live on. Yes, he was different today.

'Just vegetables?' he asked aloud.

'Oh, I've got tins here. And I'm fond of pipis. It's all I need. Got no money, you see. The old bitch wouldn't trust me with it, so she stocked my larder instead,' and there was a sudden harsh bray of laughter.

They stopped before a high frame of runner beans. 'Look at that fellow,' said Firpo. 'Just look at this one.' He caught hold of a loose frond of bean. 'He's the fastest of the lot here. I twined

him round the wire, and round and round he went, chasing himself right to the top, first in the field. What's he going to do now? He's got to come down again, hasn't he? Yes, and that's just what he's done. But he's lost his drive, got no guts any more. Look at him now, just wandering about, looking for some poor bean to climb on. He's going to get mean soon, and then maybe he'll pick on one of his mates. Hope he doesn't get mean.'

John stared at him, fascinated. Was this Firpo? Did Firpo live in a world where plants were like people, and could you really know them? Could you like them? And suddenly, he was four years old again, and his mother had given him a hollyhock seed for his very own. He pushed it gently in the black earth outside the back door and waited. For a week, nothing happened. And then on the eighth day there was a little clear green point on top of the soil. He watered it, stared at it with all his might to make it grow faster. In another week it was an inch high, confident and beautiful. His mother said, ' Now you'll have to look out for slugs.' Alarmed, he put a box over it that night, and slept badly. Next morning, he rushed to it and whipped off the box. Two fat slugs lay coiled luxuriously about what had been his glorious shoot. Oh! He had lifted his foot and ground the nasty, slimy things into the earth. Why, with a whole garden to wolf up did they have to choose his tiny plant? His first fascination at the miracle of growth had been soured by its cruelty and waste. He had never forgotten it. He tried to tell Firpo about it now. He listened with his head on one side, and nodded. They stood there a moment, the long gawky one, and the boy, and neither spoke.

John broke it. ' Have you been doing any more training? ' he asked gently. Something stirred in Firpo ; his eyes started to shift uneasily, and a change came over his face. ' Yes,' he said, and ' Yes,' again. His face began to twitch. He dug the hoe furiously into the soil, and tiny clods of earth flew into the beans. ' Firpo's been challenged,' he said abruptly.

' Have you? Who by?'

Firpo did not answer, but took from his pocket a dirty piece of paper. ' Read that,' he commanded, with a slight lift in his voice.

John read : ' Dear Mr Firpo, we have heard that you are a contestant for the 1932 Olympic Games. Some of our local boys have begun training too, and we think it might be good practice for you and them if we had a challenge race on the beach. The

tide will be out next Sunday afternoon, and we suggest 2 p.m. as the time. The course will be along to the first cable and back, no handicaps. Our local athletic club will provide a starter, and has kindly donated a prize of one guinea for the winner. Kindly signify your acceptance of these terms to the above address,' and the letter was signed by two young men he knew, strong, athletic youths who used to sprawl and skylark in the week-ends outside their gate. He gave it back to Firpo, excited.

'Are you going to do it?' he asked eagerly.

'Yes,' said Firpo. 'It will do them good. Competition's never done any harm to anyone.'

He turned away again, and gave the hoe a few sharp jabs round the lettuces. Then he swung round again, and in a harsh, high-pitched voice, began talking to the boy.

'Firpo's the name, Firpo. You know that, don't you? Well, Firpo can do anything at all, see? Anything you like to name. Firpo's not like the rest of them. No! . . . But what do they do to Firpo, eh? Yes, what do they do? They lock him up, they hide him away from the sun, and give him another name. But it's Firpo, Firpo, always Firpo! They think they can stop Firpo, but, (and here his voice dropped to a cunning whisper) 'Firpo's too strong for them, too smart altogether. You see, boy.' His face came closer, the voice was almost a gurgle now. 'The time's coming, oh ho yes, it's not far away, when Firpo will have his day, and what will he be then? A made man, boy, a made man. Do you see? A made man.' He gave a little hop and clapped his hands twice. The words poured out thickly—John could barely follow them. But every sentence seemed to end with the words 'made man, made man.' They reverberated through the still afternoon, they seemed to bang little hollows inside his skull. After a while no other words had any meaning for him but these two. For the rest, Firpo might have been talking Double Dutch.

At last he had finished, and the fury seemed to die in him. He turned slowly back to his hoe and leaned on it in an old tired way. He didn't seem to know John was there. John gave a little cough; Firpo didn't move. John began humming softly, but Firpo made no sign. John threw a stone into the trellis ahead of them, it bounded down the branches, fell out, and scuttled across the path into a drain. Still Firpo gave no sign. John thought he had done enough, and backed away slowly. Firpo did not raise

his head, and soon the gorse bushes interposed between them and he was alone. It was only now that he recalled what he had come for : to apologize for his family's bad manners yesterday. But that no longer seemed important.

He reached the beach and walked briskly along. A deep voice like the headmaster on Friday morning parade began rumbling away at him : left right, left right. But it was not left right, left right. Made man, made man, that was what his brain was saying. Made man! Yes! He stopped. The thought of a man half finished, soon to be made whole was wonderful, irresistible. Firpo without a head—look Firpo, here's a beautiful head, just your size. Or an arm—we've a nice line in arms, Firpo. And just look at this super little foot. He giggled and began to run. Made man, made man, the voice shouted in a higher key ; he ran as fast as he could, still the voice gabbled away, exactly in time with his legs. He arrived at the house, exhausted. Made man, the voice whispered to him as he went in the back door, and then it left him alone.

His mother was out, goody. He rushed straight to the little dark room where his father kept his books, fumbled around a moment and emerged, clutching *The Compleat Athlete*, which his father had received as a prize when he was at school. He took it to his room, laid it down reverently and began to study it. He passed over the exercises—Firpo seemed to know all about them—and flipped the pages until he came to the section on diet. Green vegetables, fluids—they were all right. Then he read : ' The Compleat Athlete needs plenty of body-building substance ; he cannot do without a good thick steak, chops or liver at least once a day.' Steak, chops, liver! But Firpo lived on pipis, tinned food and vegetables, and had no money to buy more. He just had to have some meat if he wanted to build his body up before Sunday, or he would lose the race and then, goodnight to the made man. But he mustn't lose the race, he mustn't! He must win, win, win, and then he would be a made man, and go to Los Angeles next year and win everything there too, and come back a hero. He saw Firpo leading the field in the half-mile, Firpo floating across the pit in the long jump, Firpo's great thews quivering (because of course his body would be completely re-built by then) as he put all his weight behind the shot. And there was Firpo on a dais, laurel leaves on his brow, receiving the plaudits of the crowd. He put up his hand for silence. All was

still. The voice of Firpo. ' Thank you, thank you. I just want to tell you that I owe all my success to a fair headed boy in far away New Zealand who stood by me when all was grey. Are you listening, John? ' You bet I am, said John aloud, secure in the empty house, and thought how infinitely more exciting it was to have a real live Firpo to think about than the pallid creatures between the covers of books. And as for Greta and Harrison—ah well. One grew up.

Suddenly, he knew how he could help Firpo. He ran to the sideboard, found the carving knife and bore it back to his room, then took his money box off the dressing table. His mother had been giving him sixpence a week for doing the lawns on top of his other pocket money, and it felt pretty heavy. No pictures these days to use it up ; there ought to be about five shillings now. He turned the box upside down, and the money rattled down to the mouth end ; in with the knife, right way up again, now : draw it out slowly, carefully. Half a crown. The same again, a shilling this time, and again, until he had five shillings and fourpence laid out on his bed. That should do until Sunday.

He could hardly wait until school was over next day. He rushed out of the gates, down the drive and round the corner to the butcher's. He had his piece well rehearsed ; he hadn't been on all those messages for his mother for nothing. When his turn came, he blurted it all out in a rush. ' Please-a-pound-of-topside-steak-and-make-it-lean-please.' ' Here, steady on,' said the butcher in a funny voice. ' Come again, son.' He repeated it more slowly, the butcher seemed satisfied, and cut it off for him. ' Your mother will like this,' he said, handing it over. ' I hope so,' said John judicially, paid the two shillings, put the meat in his schoolbag and ran all the way to the bach.

He arrived, done, with something knocking away in the pit of his stomach. He rested a moment, climbed the steps and made his way to the bach slowly, peered in. Firpo? No, he wasn't here. Digging perhaps, or down at the beach, gathering pipis. What should he do? . . . Yes, yes, of course! He would just leave it here, on the table where Firpo would see it, and creep off now, without a word. A mysterious benefactor. Firpo would think that God was on his side. He left it, and went back the way he had come. There was no sign of Firpo on the beach. That night, he could hardly do his sums—a great bulging giant of a Firpo kept peering

at him through the figures.

Every afternoon that week he took his offering. Next day it was liver, after that kidneys and a slice of bacon, on Friday, chops. He never saw Firpo, though twice he heard him at work further up the garden singing a strange song in a tuneless growl. And then yesterday it had been a near thing when Bruno had come sniffing round him, all for a game. He had whispered, 'Out, Bruno, out,' fiercely, and the dog had obeyed, though somewhat disgruntled, and he had slipped out unobserved, reminding himself that dogs happily don't tell tales.

On Saturday morning, he had messages to do, and ninepence left. He bought three kidneys, and went home the long way so that he could call in at Firpo's and leave his gift. He approached the bach as quietly as before, left his little parcel on the table, then went to seek Firpo. He was in the tomato house, and when he saw John came out to meet him.

'Hello, boy,' he said.

'Hello, Firpo,' said John with suppressed excitement. 'How are you? Are you feeling fit?'

Once again, the slight uneasiness in the eyes, and the arrogant confident look that followed it. It did not disturb John now. That was how Firpo was.

'Fit as a tick, Firpo is,' he said.

'And,' said John meaningly, 'have you been eating properly? Getting all the body-building foods?'

'Fit as a tick,' said Firpo again.

John thought a moment. How could he get round to it? It wasn't much good being subtle today, it seemed.

'Shall we go and look at the bach?' he said invitingly. 'Um—are there any improvements, maybe?'

Firpo beat his chest. 'Fit. Fit!' he said. This was hopeless. John started walking towards the bach. 'I've got something to show you,' he said despondently, and moved off. After a moment, Firpo followed him, and silent, they arrived at the bach together. As they reached the door, a long brown shape darted between them and disappeared. Bruno. John stood still. Then horror clutched at him. He rushed into the bach. The kidneys had gone, paper and all. Not a trace, not a trace. He turned to Firpo despairingly.

'Firpo, have you been eating plenty of meat?' he asked, his voice shaking a little.

'Don't eat meat,' said Firpo. 'No money.'

'Have you had any this week?' John was almost suffocated.

'Just pipis, fruit, vegetables. Plenty of water. Sweet corn.'

John sat down, sick with disappointment. That Bruno. Oh, the nasty sly brute. It must have been hiding round here every day he came, just waiting until he left to wolf it all up. Hell and Tommy. All his pocket money. And Firpo? How could he win tomorrow, thin as a stick, and his body not built up at all? Oh, ooh. He couldn't tell him about it now, couldn't stay either. He muttered something about having to get back with the messages, left him, and walked listlessly back along the beach, feeling old and heavy with care.

(To be continued)

COMMENTARIES

John Summers

The Group Show

ALTHOUGH the 1948 Group Show in Christchurch pleasantly surprised me the bulk of the work did not show that 'edge' of genuine imaginative expression for which one looks in an advanced group. Patently some of it belonged to the confectioners, in other work imagination was completely smothered by irrelevant technique, while into a third category fell the work of those who have mistaken pale washes and easy colour harmonies for that true delicacy one finds in the Chinese. For this reason my attention is confined to the work of some eight or nine of the artists.

It was good to have the opportunity of seeing the work of the Auckland painters John Weeks and Eric Lee-Johnson, two of the

guest exhibitors this year. I found Mr Weeks' pictures light but stimulating, graceful and pleasing but striking no deep chord—I am given to understand though that this is by no means a representative selection of his paintings. To judge by the works shown his imagination finds better expression in his more abstract paintings than where it is tied too closely to the object. For example, *Composition: Music and the Dance* was charming in its light swaying grace, *The Old Kitchen Stove* merely representational, or so nearly so as not to yield enjoyment.

There was a quiet appeal in Eric Lee-Johnson's two softly dramatic water-colour landscapes. I feel that the mood in which he paints recaptures the atmosphere of Myth. In the soft shadows of the tree in *Waikato Bay* one half expects to discover the shape of a dryad. However, when the artist attempts to state his feelings more explicitly as he seems to be trying to do in *Roots and Stones* whose shapes at once recall Europa and the Bull, and *Eroded Coast* whose half-formed dancing figures reminded me of a Walpurgis Night, his conviction wavers. And, I think, it is to this hesitancy that the rather pallid indefinite shapes are due. The artist should, following an honourable tradition, paint what he imagines more boldly and accurately. By this means he and we will learn whether he is giving our old mythical inheritance a new meaning or whether he is tritely echoing a long dead past. And if I have seemed bold in thus interpreting Mr Lee-Johnson's paintings it is because the last picture in his series was called *Scylla and Charybdis*, thus crystallizing my own half-formed conclusions.

Swamp Land by John Tole, another Auckland painter, made me wish I could see more of his work. It is a fine evocative picture in rich sombre smudges of colour. Compared with M. T. Woollaston's tense paintings it is narcotic.

Like Leo Bensemann, Dorothy Manning handles small themes well. The solid richness of her *Still Life* conveyed meaning down half the length of the hall. None of Mr Bensemann's pictures sounded, for me, the note of his *St Francis* which was hung last year. But the *Portrait of Alistair Buist* was handled with a pleasing largeness and simplicity of modelling. I wish something of this appeared in Mr Bensemann's black and white illustrations, for in these absorption in detail dissipates his sense of design. Design which focusses and gives value to detail could have strengthened his *Illustration for the Pardoner's Tale*.

The Intruder was the best of Mr Russell Clark's nine pictures painted in almost as many styles, a vivacious flat painting reminiscent of the best in child art. But Mr Clark has no fixed star, and inspiration when it comes is uneven. In *Farm with a Windbreak*, for example, while the white blossoming tree has been surely seen and felt a good deal of the painting is merely furniture placed about and around the one living object.

M. T. Woollaston's paintings, through some development either in him or in my appreciation since last year, seem now more organized and intelligible. With their rich dulled reds and blues in distant hills there is combined an amazing subtlety of intermingling shades of green and yellow. Even in less organized pictures such as *Summer Evening* and *Wakefield's Shed*, the dominant rhythm of the hills almost persuades one that the pictures are better than they are. At two yards from his paintings many individual harmonies appear, but these are so low in key that at the proper focussing distance, *i.e.*, to see the picture as a whole, they are lost. I do not believe that in any single picture Mr Woollaston has reached his goal. On the other hand there is an extraordinary range and wealth in his pictures which makes his task difficult.

Colin McCahon has the great virtue of not being frightened of ridicule. This gives his imagination room to play, sometimes to extremely good effect. His *Hail Mary*, which suggests descent from Russian icons, shows a new individual perception of meaning in religious subjects. Tenderness, simplicity and strength all emanate from the sure flowing design of the angel of Annunciation as she leans over Mary. The three large arum lilies in the centre of the painting act as a chorus stressing the beauty of holiness. And if I have mentioned Russian icons rather than Fra Angelico it is because in the former there is no division of attention ; every line carries religious emotion, whereas in Angelico part of his attention was absorbed in mastering perspective. Technique and idea were also happily wedded in the *Sink Hole Landscape* where cool colours achieve an effect of resplendent richness. But *Takaka Night and Day* after a while raised doubts. While an interesting picture it did not seem to measure up to its own potentialities in the same way as the former painting. Thus we look at the hills and find them repetitive rather than rich and infinitely various as we suppose the artist must have felt them. The appalling

strength of *The Family* temporarily withers the critical faculty.

On the whole despite his wild experiments and the limited range of his palette there are elements of greatness in Mr McCahon's paintings.

Doris Lusk's two landscapes of the Waikaremoana country show an unusual vastness of conception. Other people in New Zealand have painted our hills leaving merely the impression that one is seeing them through the wrong end of a telescope; but *The Lake, Tuai* in its depth, strength and harshness recaptures Cresswell's ' from which their sombre and savage landscape holds darkly aloof.' *Power House, Tuai* is an easier and more pleasant picture to grasp and seems to be a bridge swung between Doris Lusk's earlier lyrical paintings and this more commanding work. It is to be hoped that this artist will continue to explore the new region she has entered upon.

I am more particularly drawn to the last three painters because they have begun to live in New Zealand as painters, neither self-consciously stressing the fact by putting in the obvious and typical detail, nor on the other hand painting in some no-man's-land of the spirit as if New Zealand was totally irrelevant to their purposes. It *does* exist for them, quietly and naturally. From its substance, as from the pigments they buy, their paintings, whether landscape or figure studies, are made. They would then seem to form the beginnings of that ' native school of painting ' for which Mr R. E. Kennedy looked in his review of *A Century of Art in Otago* in *Landfall* 6.

Since neither of the daily papers in Christchurch thought fit to refer to the Group Show, the present belated review is the only printed record of it.

A National Theatre

I — *George Swan*

THE only country in the world lacking a professional theatre is New Zealand.

Point this out to the average New Zealander and he will

murmur something about our preoccupation in pioneering the land, in raising our families, in settling our political differences, in fighting for our lives. He will then pause for breath and be overtaken by an uneasy feeling that even these weighty assertions will not any longer justify our chronic failure to recognize the significance of the theatre in the life of a nation. So he will throw in the well-worn tag about our being, after all, only a hundred years old and promptly go to ground.

But he will know full well that something ought to be done about it. Many of us during the recent war had opportunities of going to the theatre for the first time—we now understand something of what we lack in this way in New Zealand. But nothing is done because the same average New Zealander knows nothing of the means to be taken to secure a professional theatre nor of the people who might be interested in getting and keeping it going.

The non-professional theatre has struggled hard to fill the gap. Visitors from overseas are often surprised by the standard of acting and presentation of plays achieved here and there by the New Zealand amateur. There can be no question that he can hold his place with actors of his own kind in any part of the world. The non-professional theatre in this country took steps a year or two ago to add to its strength and to extend its own influence by forming a federation known as The New Zealand Drama Council, which includes forty-seven separate non-professional theatre organizations. The usefulness of the Council has been recognized by the Government in practical shape by grants out of the public purse. The non-professional theatre is playing a lively role in the life of the New Zealand community, and this has given birth to the notion that we can, and should, do without a professional theatre. Those who adhere to this theory argue that no theatre can be of real social value unless the people themselves are actively engaged in it, that the needs are financial support and expert guidance for the existing non-professional organizations, and that these self-same organizations are *de facto* the National Theatre and should now be accorded *de jure* recognition as such. They will go further and say that experience teaches that the profit-motive destroys art, that you cannot be an amateur (in the literal sense) and a professional at one and the same time. The commercial theatre, they say, will constantly debase the public taste. It will always prefer to pander to the emotions rather

than to provide food for thought.

The present writer can see no merit in any of these arguments. A distinction should be drawn, at once, between the ' commercial ' theatre and the ' professional ' theatre. There are quacks in every profession. The professional theatre is the one that is peopled by those who love their calling, that, peopled by *amateurs*. It is this kind of theatre that we must demand and get for our National Theatre in New Zealand.

The theatre is a great educator ; there is general agreement that for the further education of the mass of the people the theatre stands without peer. The encouragement of an active interest in the theatre must be one of the fundamental items in the nation's education programme. Theatre, professional and non-professional, ought therefore to be brought within easy reach of the greatest number. To maintain that only those who take an active part in the theatre can gain from the theatre is, surely, great nonsense. True it is that those who interest themselves in it in some active and useful capacity gain a very great deal ; it is equally true that an audience remains an essential element in any play and every intelligent member of it can gain just as much benefit in viewing the play as can its leading player in taking part in it.

In taking part in a play you learn to speak your mother tongue clearly and audibly and, if you have some talent for the business, beautifully ; to move with grace, to carry yourself well. It should add to confidence and poise. By all means, then, take part in plays, but if you are a non-professional it will not be long before you have reached the conclusion that you can only hope to reach a limited standard of excellence as an actor. A spare-time actor, unless he has genius, cannot and does not offer himself for comparison with the full-time actor. The standard of achievement in the non-professional theatre will always be limited by the time factor. The non-professional begins rehearsal at the end of the day, a full day's work already done. He is tired. He can afford to give perhaps two and a half hours of his time for two or three nights per week for five or six weeks. Compare these limitations with life in the professional theatre where the only limiting factor is physical endurance.

Training is necessary before one can become an actor. Would anyone in his right mind be rash enough to try to entertain an audience as a pianist without first learning to play? Yet there

are many who think they should be able to act in a play without any previous training for it. Speaking generally, it is only the professional who can afford enough time for training to become an actor.

This is not to argue that the non-professional should give up and leave the boards to the professional. It is rather to emphasize that first-rate achievement in theatre arts, in common with the other arts, calls for one's whole time and thought.

The non-professional theatre in New Zealand has lacked standards of comparison. The flying visit paid to New Zealand recently by the Old Vic Company will provide us with a much-needed stimulus. But we shall soon forget. If we had a full-time company of trained players with us at regular intervals we would be stirred constantly to lift the standard of acting and presenting plays by non-professionals to a level approaching the best in the theatre. The sense of striving, the life-blood of the theatre, would never be allowed to rest.

Talented New Zealand youngsters must now leave their own country if they decide to seek careers in the theatre. There is no future for them here. A number of the best of them are already lost to us, at least for the time being. New Zealand apathy is fast becoming notorious.

Finally, the National Theatre must be a truly mobile one capable of taking the theatre into back country villages. The non-professional theatre can only find a successful existence in the centres of population.

2 *Ngaio Marsh*

THE NEED for a New Zealand professional theatre having been argued by George Swan it is my job to discuss and if possible set out a formula for its establishment, and an outline of its character and aims.

Four years ago this would have been an easier matter. For one reason or another (ricochet from the impact of peace, sense of frustration and deprivation following years of theatre-famine, popularity of amateur societies) it seemed then that the time was ripe for any group of integrity. Such a group, it seemed, might

raise enough capital, secure by some means or other adequate playhouses, find a good producer and adopt the policy best suited to its own aims and limitations. We were within a breath of assembling such a group and failed to do so only through a series of setbacks that were fortuitous rather than fundamental. I believe that if we had been able to do so at that time we would have met with success. We would have come in on the boom, ridden it for some time and not been put to the real test until now. Now, the boom is a thing of the past. The hungry mood that in those days welcomed any concert performer, any theatre project, has gone. We are back to something that I suppose must be called normality. The cinema-going New Zealander must be persuaded that the theatre offers him an experience that is worth a change of habit, an adjustment in viewpoint and a little more money.

What kind of permanent theatre will do this in our community? It is possible, I fancy, that a big state-controlled organization ushered in with a blast of nationally orchestrated fanfares would do the trick. It would be the thing to go to the National Theatre as it is the thing to go to the National Orchestra. Audiences would settle down into familiar strata—the Informed Critics, the Iconoclasts, the Enthusiasts and the Others : these last being the bulk of the audience who simply include National Theatre among routine festivities throughout the year. It is possible, too, that by a method of painless elevation, by excluding first the puerile, then the second-rate and finally all but the best in dramatic writing, the taste of these audiences would be gradually raised.

I am against this formula. My principal objection to it is rooted in the feeling that our theatre should not be under the direct and immediate control of politicians or state departments. There are too many dangers, of which bureaucratic wire-pulling and political bias are not the least. The governing forces in such a set-up would be divorced from theatre, remote from the arena and therefore out of touch with the most significant problems and conflicts inevitable in the development of the project.

At the other extreme is the group or number of rural and urban groups under a producer or producers, choosing plays and players with a free hand and receiving such grants of money from the state as the state shall previously determine. This sounds well, has the right tang of independence about it, and suggests at once the most courageous kind of field-work and exploration. Under

inspired direction and with extraordinary good fortune attending it, such a project might do well indeed, but the hazards are great, the weight of total responsibility too certain to fall across the shoulders of an already heavily burdened producer-director or into the hands of committees assembled from the players themselves. Yet it seems to me that out of the discussion of some such project the satisfactory answer will appear. The risks, difficulties and hardships of the completely independent and self-supporting group must be lessened, the danger of bureaucratic strangulation avoided.

Mr R. A. K. Mason, in an article written for the Christchurch *Press*, has given, to my mind, the most satisfying formula yet suggested. He says that a council should be set up acting as an intermediary and advisory body between the state and the theatre. This council would, I suggest, set out a general plan of action, discuss the character, size, appointments, aims and working methods of the theatre, and make recommendations to the state about the disposal of subsidies. Obviously the choice of members for this body is of the first importance. At least two of them should be people with an authoritative working knowledge of the theatre, one should be able to speak for the world of theatre beyond New Zealand, one should be a man of business with practical experience in theatre and one should represent our university and schools. This council, acting as an advisory committee would be the link between the state fund and the theatre itself. It would recommend the initial appointments, and once these were made, meddle as little as possible with the producer, players and staff. The state should, I suggest, provide a subsidy and meddle not at all.

As for the plan of action, the bone and muscle of the project, I feel that it should take some such shape as this. First an English producer of the best possible sort, appointed after the most careful and informed search. It is not going too far, I believe, to say that the integrity and life of the theatre will depend upon this appointment. Next : a period of at least six months' training under this producer. The course at any reputable school of drama is two years, but assuming that the players would have some experience, it is possible that inspired, remorseless and unrepentantly enthusiastic training could weld them into a technically equipped company in half a year. Next : the gradual formation of rural and urban groups following an initial tour, preferably

in a classical play, by the whole company through the cities and towns of New Zealand. Later : a school of training formed on the lines of The Old Vic Theatre School or, alternatively, a project by which accepted students could be recommended for the Old Vic School itself.

I am certain that in forming our theatre we should look beyond New Zealand. There is not space, here, to discuss the possibility of a strictly indigenous theatre in the sense, for example, that the Dublin Abbey Theatre Players are an indigenous group. I can only say, baldly, that I believe there is no useful analogy to be found here and that if a theatre of this sort is to appear it will have the best chance of doing so through a movement based on the principles I have tried to set down.

3 *Arnold F. Goodwin*

A COMMON error in much of the discussion on the development of a New Zealand theatre is the assumption that it must follow a form found in other countries.

Even if this was held to be desirable it would, for several reasons, be impracticable.

While, in the past, such theatre as we have had has of necessity been transported from England, it must not be accepted without question that the New Zealand theatre and drama of the future should bear any more emotional or intellectual likeness to the English than to the American, Irish, Russian or even Australian. This is equally true of both its content and its form.

In short, the theatre we wish to build must be of us, and by us all, not on loan or purchase from elsewhere. And we must learn the slow and perhaps the only sure way—by trial and error.

We can certainly use the help and experience of other countries and the knowledge and ability of artists from overseas. We can profit for instance by the visit of The Old Vic Company, but we cannot mould ourselves upon the same pattern. We must discover our own genius.

If this be granted, then in the forefront of our particular problems stands the geographical formation of our country and

the distribution of its population. Not for us is there a potential audience that would make possible either artistically or financially the successes of the West End or Broadway. While there is much to be said for the necessity of a training school in the theatre arts the best method of utilizing such training and the putting it to practice is not so simple.

There is undoubtedly (on the face of it) a great deal to recommend the establishment of the finest group of players and technicians available as a permanent company, under the training and direction of the most able producer to be imported from overseas. The work of such a company would, of necessity, be confined to towns possessing a theatre suitable for the adequate presentation of their productions. And of these there are few.

But the point for consideration is the fact that fifty per cent of the people of New Zealand live outside the metropolitan areas and the greater proportion of them at distances that put them completely out of touch with the theatres that are available. And these are the people whose need for theatre is greatest.

What then is the solution?

Within recent months a self-contained unit of six people, carrying all its equipment including proscenium, scenery, lighting and sound amplification, covered four thousand miles under its own transport and gave performances in forty towns of a repertoire including Shakespeare and modern comedy. Sponsored by the Community Arts Service of Auckland University College, the performances were given in tents, halls, schools and in the largest theatres, at a cost to the C.A.S. of approximately pound for pound on the money taken in admission charges. While the standard of performance was below that which could ultimately be achieved by a thorough training and greater experience, it was far in advance of local amateur effort, and it received the unstinted praise and support of people who travelled upwards of thirty miles to see the performances and included many to whom the living theatre was unknown.

From this experiment—abruptly terminated by lack of the finance necessary to enable further work to be undertaken—many valuable lessons were learned, which must receive the consideration of all interested in the development of New Zealand theatre.

Amongst them was this : that a theatre which wishes to survive and expand must devote as much time, thought and

energy to developing its audiences as it does to preparing the show. It demands the same craftsmanship, patience, artistic imagination, integrity and plain hard work to bring the audience to the theatre, and the theatre to the audience, as it does to present the play.

In this respect, the means to be employed, the techniques, and the style of presentation, are of paramount importance. Are we, for instance, to be irrevocably committed to the generally accepted form of the proscenium frame and the fourth-wall tradition as a necessity of dramatic production? Much significant and exciting work is being done elsewhere in a style of presentation called variously, central staging, theatre-in-the-round, or arena theatre, which makes any large unencumbered room a possible stage. With the audience surrounding the playing area as at a football game or an axeman's carnival, and with adequate and imaginative lighting, exciting and realistic theatre can take place on an area of bare floor twenty feet square.

Margo Jones, one of America's outstanding producers, has made an arena theatre one of the most successful professional ventures in that country, both commercially and artistically.

The advantages of a theatre-in-the-round are obvious in relation to the travelling theatre faced with a lack of suitable accommodation for proscenium frame presentation. Scenery can be left out of the budget and plays of many changing scenes can be attempted. For the learning actor the form supplies an ideal introduction to theatre with the rightful emphasis on validity and honesty of performance. Audiences feel much more drawn into the play, and, under imaginative production, into the magic circle of theatre.

It would appear from the experimental work already done, that the mobile unit fully equipped to work under all the conditions to be met with throughout the country, should receive first consideration and support in any scheme that involves the spending of public money on the theatre. What has been accomplished by one unit could serve as a guide to the development of others. Combined, they could ultimately form the basis of a truly National Theatre that had grown from the ground upwards, without on the one hand suffering the restraining exigencies of big business, or being limited by the technical shortcomings of the amateur on the other.

This is surely more desirable than any grandiose scheme for a National Theatre which would fail to meet present needs, while the cost would be much less than that necessary to finance a large and elaborately equipped stock company.

REVIEWS

THE FIFTH CHILD. James Courage. *Constable.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

IT APPEARS to me that Mr Courage, who has all the technical skill necessary to write a first-rate novel, has been too much hampered by the intractable nature of his raw material. The people in *The Fifth Child* are South Island sheep-farming pukka sahibs—but you don't meet them on the farm. Mrs Warner, who has an income of her own, has rented a house in a city suburb, while her husband continues to 'mess' about the farm. For company she has her little boy and girl, and two servants—and shortly they are joined by her other two children, both in their later teens and fresh from boarding school. Mrs Warner is soon to have her fifth child: unfortunately her husband has been 'insisting on his rights.' She is bored and anxious, annoyed and depressed—and she wants to be away from her husband while she tries to decide whether she will leave him permanently or not. She has had much to put up with over the years, apparently. 'One of the habits she had never, never after what seemed a lifetime of trying, managed to break him into was that of eating punctual meals at a well-set table.' Mr Warner came out from England as a young man, and one infers that he must have quickly made up his mind that it was pointless to come so far only to be bored by the table manners of Hampstead. His wife doesn't have much of a time in her suburb, however. She takes her younger children into town and lets them eat themselves sick on cake; if one of them is having a bath she worries about whether the blind has been pulled down; her teen-age daughter makes dates with a boy-friend; her eldest son doesn't know what he wants to do; and her husband keeps coming down from the farm in his car to tell her he sees no reason why she shouldn't return to him. Finally, after the birth of her child, she does return. (Her husband undertakes to remain in his own bed for the future.) After all, both servants have given notice, her son is going off to England to become a doctor, and she has consented to her daughter's tentative three year engagement. Things are breaking up in fact, so she must be brave and take it and not let the whole show down.

The material of *The Fifth Child* is thoroughly banal: there aren't many

suburban fatuities that Mr Courage has left out. But a writer should never be blamed for his choice of material. All that may fairly be said is that he must recognize that the limitations inherent in certain material may make it most unlikely that he will succeed in creating a major work of art. Mr Courage's material is of the sort that may yield very good minor art with the right handling. And it must be recorded right now that there are very beautiful passages in *The Fifth Child*, particularly some of those dealing with the two younger children. There is also, throughout the book, a really penetrating rendering of the character of the adolescent daughter, Barbara. Mr Courage's technique is rather like that of the Imagist poets, who try to make you see very clearly, and leave you to draw your own conclusions. Nevertheless, it is impossible for any serious novelist to finish his story without letting you know (at any rate, implicitly), that he has judged his characters. And much of your feeling about the quality of his work will depend upon whether or not you are convinced that his judgments are the right ones. I'm afraid I disagree with Mr Courage's main judgment. With somewhat more detachment from his material he might very well have avoided his tendency to side with the depressing Mrs Warner. Nor do I feel that the almost complete absence of any social context, except the pukka sahib one, is altogether to the novel's advantage. But I would emphasize that it is a distinguished contribution to the literature of our country. There isn't a single hint of the technical ineptitude, the earnest amateurishness, that has disfigured so many of our 'efforts.'

Frank Sargeson

YEAR BOOK OF THE ARTS IN NEW ZEALAND, No. 4 : 1948. Edited by Howard Wadman. *H. H. Tombs Ltd.* 25*s.*

THE ARTS YEAR BOOK has been published for four years, time to make comparison both with itself and with productions overseas. Few periodicals featuring the visual arts are able to keep going so long. Its survival alone is ground for satisfaction. It is interesting to compare it with a periodical of a wider scope which includes much similar material such as *Graphis*, an 'international journal for Graphic Art, Applied Art and Art in Advertising,' published in Zurich. There the sections on contemporary painting, illustration and design for theatre and ballet jolt our *Arts Year Book* into perspective and underline our monotonous tradition, lack of individuality and experiment, and paucity of technical skill. The comparison suggests also that exuberance and humour are conspicuously absent among us.

In this *Arts Year Book* Baxter, Glover, M. K. Joseph and Ruth Gilbert lighten our low seriousness. Yvonne Bendall too shows a light fantasy, Bessie Christie a shrewd humour, and Sam Williams an imagination organized and intelligent. It is the poets rather than the visual artists who succeed in creating a real world, unseen before but recognizable as our own. Among the artists Lee-Johnson and Vida Steinert, Gwyneth Richardson, Anthony Treadwell and Charles Tole re-interpret the New Zealand scene.

There are some faults of production which should be noted. A few

of the reproductions are intrinsically inept, or made meaningless or obvious to the point of vulgarity by loss of colour. (A fault not confined to this book. Many plates in overseas art publications are wasted on paintings which cannot stand reproduction in monotone.) I would list eleven reproductions which are wasted space, from W. S. Wauchop's *Mt Alta after Rain* to the *Building Site* of Vida Steinert, although, when judged by a reproduction in colour, the latter's *Road to Colville* is one of the finest in the book. It is a pity also that one of T. A. McCormack's was not in colour. The lino cuts and wood engravings would generally have been better in black and white than in the combination of ink and paper used. The heavy-coloured paper is less disturbing in Rona Dyer's skilful wood engraving *The Pool* and the printing of K. W. Hassall's lino cut detracts nothing from the expert use he makes of his medium. Mervyn Taylor's engraving *Creation* is much below his usual standard.

Taken section by section, and admitting some vigorous exceptions, I would rate this 1948 book inferior to last year's in variety and merit. Last year Mr Wadman, referring to the visual arts, said ' our policy for the future is fewer and better ' and ' practised greater exclusion,' with the result that the 1947 *Year Book* included work better selected and more interesting than had appeared in preceding volumes. It remains the best. In the current book there are many omissions. Some artists may for personal reasons have been unable to do much work. Would that explain why there is nothing of John Weeks or Evelyn Page ? The stage and costume designs of Sam Williams deserve more space than they get this year, and people outside Wellington would have been particularly interested to see something of the work Sam Cairncross did in France. Half-a-dozen artists are again ' featured.' The editor has felt that he must choose the work of different artists. That would be reasonable if New Zealand had a bounty of excellent painters with ideas about art both illuminating and pertinent. (In this issue the work and comment of Stewart Maclennan and A. J. C. Fisher are outstanding, their emphasis on craftsmanship necessary and well-illustrated.) But already the editor has had slightly to lower his standards. If the ' fewer and better ' ideal is to be continued it may mean admitting scarcity and reproducing work from the same twenty or so artists each year, until new people appear whose knowledge of their subject and directness of treatment warrant their inclusion. Such a policy should not lessen interest in the *Year Book* unless its appeal is fundamentally that of the school magazine. Anything fresh from Weeks or McCormack, Lee-Johnson, Maclennan, May Gilbert or Woollaston—to name a few—would repay in pleasure the layman's annual study. And a half-dozen reproductions instead of the usual two would give a better chance of following each artist's development. In a survey of our visual arts some mention of good printing could well be made. Some pages from Caxton's new book of printing types would have been a welcome addition.

In his able, witty and sometimes contradictory editorial Mr Wadman delicately turns with his toe the corpse of our applied arts. He considers with fairness the dogged bad taste inside our homes. (It is a pity that this should be largely a sermon for believers.) When he asks ' who will raise

the standard?' Mr Wadman sees the architects as heralds of a risen New Zealand taste. In fact they still have on them the habiliments of death. As professionals, they are tied to the demands of ignorant and intractable clients. And the public, even if shown the good, will not necessarily admire. I heard recently of a couple who refuse to build on their section next to a house illustrated in this *Year Book*, because 'the thing looks like a coffee stall' and 'lowers the tone of the neighbourhood'! Do the plates on architecture in this *Year Book* give reasonableness to Mr Wadman's faith? Several pleasant houses, chiefly in the creosote and white habit, one school and a proposed civic centre for Auckland. Is it that here is being evolved something peculiar to our needs, which by its harmony and proportion, will impose its intrinsic superiority on popular taste? Whether the fault lies with the editor or with the building controller the impression from this—and previous—*Year Books* is that houses are the only buildings which have materialized. But architects should be judged primarily by their public or commercial building. And of this the *Year Book* gives no estimate.

In his answer to this question 'who will raise the standard,' Mr Wadman suggests that the State and big business may be persuaded to use the work of trained designers and hopes that, from their example, the taste for good design will be implanted in the community. In this vexed question of which will come first—the supply or the demand for the good—it is certainly necessary that individuals should feel strongly enough to insist on the simple, the well-proportioned and the appropriate. Can we really expect much from the head of a department or a large firm who share the general outlook of the community, unless pressure is brought from outside? Already the buyers for large firms must have been offered stock from good contemporary designs in china, textiles and carpets which are being made for the British home market. It would be in the interest of the manufacturers that they should export from the same stocks. Yet a visiting British carpet manufacturer was reported in the *New Zealand Herald* of 6th December last as saying that the British manufacturers have to continue making, against their own convenience and the demands of the home market, carpets for Australia and New Zealand in colours of a 'shocking' brightness and in patterns which they consider old-fashioned and vulgar.

The section on theatre is of varied worth. Dunedin's drama is unrecorded. Mr Caffin makes statements like these. 'Galsworthy, Shaw, Shakespeare and a Wilde revival again revealed the Society's tendency to play to its large subscription membership rather than to the public in general.' (Does he really feel that the general public longs to see Sartre and Pirandello?) Referring to *The Axe*, one of the first New Zealand verse plays ever to be produced, 'One is tempted to imagine this fine play taking a place in the small field of New Zealand drama corresponding to Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* in the English theatre.'

In the Auckland and Wellington surveys there is a strong feeling that, until the part-time enthusiasts, who are sometimes very gifted producers and actors, can make the theatre a full-time job with continued and concentrated work from a team which is not permanently weary, the work of the repertory groups here cannot rise much above their present level.

These problems are all clearly and intelligently stated in a very competent review of *The Theatre in Wellington*. The names of the producers are not given but the list of plays performed in Wellington in the past year shows remarkable enterprise and good taste and gives weight in the National Theatre argument to the suggestion that groups under a local producer doing worthy and competent work should be helped to become professional.

Janet Paul

OUR OWN COUNTRY. *Paul's Book Arcade Ltd.* 25s.

'I do not dream of Sussex Downs,
Or quaint old England's quaint old towns.
I dream of what will yet be seen
In Johnsonville and Geraldine.'

Dreaming aside, if you should, for any quaint reason of your own, be seeking information about Johnsonville or Geraldine your only course at the moment would be to consult an A.A. booklet or Brett's *Guide to Every Place in N.Z.* Both will give you accurate information about population, nature of local industries, where to camp, and precise details about the availability of hot water.

With the assistance of a librarian you may discover a Centennial or Jubilee history, written by the local historian, an enthusiastic and industrious amateur. This will of course tell you more, but usually will devote half its space to the lives of town clerks, first ministers, school-teachers and policemen, and a recital of the dates of the coming of the Post-Office, church, school and electricity, in that order. First-rate historical matter will be dismissed in the introductory chapter 'Early Days in . . .' What magnificent material is quietly buried here — e.g. the North Auckland settlements of Puhoi, settled by bands from Bohemia, refugees from Austro-Hungarian religious persecution, and of Waimamaku, the Utopian settlement founded by a Christchurch carpenter as an ideal utilitarian and agnostic village, now concerned with private enterprise and the fear of God. These histories are, almost without exception, dull, pedantic, humourless and uncritical.

Except for the existence of a body of regional literature, other countries are perhaps no better served. The articles in this book, reprinted from the Army Education Welfare Service magazine, *Korero,* have made a start towards remedying our loss here. No extravagant claims are made for them by their editors; they were intended merely 'to give New Zealanders serving overseas a brief survey of the various towns and districts they had left.' But they are intelligent, critical, sympathetic, observant and at times humorous, which are qualities to welcome to New Zealand journalism.

The districts featured range from Kerikeri, a citrus town in the far North, through fat and prosperous Gisborne, proud, dusty Westport to Arrowtown, sleepy with memories—some fourteen districts in all, with rides on the Limited and the inter-island ferry, and visits to a racing stable,

an Italian-manned fishing launch and a country newspaper works added.

Written by divers hands the articles have a diversity of styles, for the most part good reportage. I do not think they could be called 'documentaries'—to qualify, documentary writing should conform to Paul Rotha's recipe for documentary film—the creative treatment of reality. Obviously this definition requires the further defining of the words 'creative' and 'reality' but retains sufficient communicable meaning to distinguish the documentary from the report. When one of these writers attempts a more subjective treatment of his material the result is a precious and perverse style ('He came hurrying along the wharf. Hurrying. Legs hurrying, arms hurrying, head hurrying, but eyes steady on the rough uneveness of planking, the wharf.'), which reminds one of the more literary advertising copy or students' magazines. One returns with pleasure to the sober and unselfconscious.

As the editors of the volume fully realize, these articles do not make a collection of *Littledenes*. They describe, racily and accurately, the physical appearances of these towns, adding, in good journalistic fashion, a light sketch of the historical background, an illustrative incident or two, a character sketch, a passage in direct speech. We see the houses and factories, we feel the climate, we count the pubs, we note the production figures.

But of the people of these parts we learn little. Driving through a series of New Zealand towns, one casually observes their monotonous similarity. The houses, shops, theatres and factories are city modelled. I have seen a glorious stucco bungalow, which might have been lifted straight from Victoria Avenue, planted in the middle of the dreary kauri-gum lands, with neatly clipped foot-high hedges, lawn, cement rabbits, etc.—the pride of the locality. Suburbia invading the desert.

But if one has to work in these districts this superficial judgment is soon revised. Even in a closely settled area such as the Waikato, every town has a character and individuality of its own.

Why has one town flourishing drama and musical societies, strong churches and sports bodies; a town of equal size not ten miles away, no drama or music, little sport, and weak church support? I know one town of three thousand which has twenty-nine youth organizations alone, another of comparable size which has two.

Why these differences?

The reasons are partly economic (the nature of local industries), partly historical (the nature of the first settlers), partly a matter of community leadership, partly accident (the existence of a good community hall, for example), partly climate, partly the amount of faith in the future—all these things add up to the atmosphere of the town, the characteristic smell which makes Opotiki different from Whakatane.

It is difficult enough to define the New Zealander; to define him so that he is recognizable from the Aussie or the Pommy. It requires a more delicate and sensitive hand, eye and ear to define the Opotikian so that he is recognizable from the Whakatanian.

'You know, this is a funny town. The people here are queer. I don't know what it is about them . . .' One hears the remark in every town.

How right it is. They are funny and queer, or rather they are different. Some day someone will map and define these individual differences. It will be a difficult and probably unrewarding task, but when we have defined the particular Kerikeri or Westport New Zealander then we can perhaps define the more general and abstract entity—the New Zealander.

To say that this book does not achieve any of this cannot be called a weakness in it, since it does not attempt the task. But it does open the way. It is, as the editors say, an invitation for more precise and permanent descriptions of the way we live and the places we live in.

As for the book itself, the Caxton Press has laboured long to give us a most handsome volume. I found it pleasant to handle and look at, from cover to tail-piece—what more can one ask. The illustrations, in half-tone and line, are excellent, especially the Bewick-like black and whites of Mervyn Taylor.

J. F. McDougall

GUNG HO. POEMS BY REWI ALLEY. Chosen and edited by H. Winston Rhodes. *The Caxton Press.* 6*s.* 6*d.*

FEW great men, whose greatness lies in doing and not in saying, are eloquent and articulate. Few can state their ideas in writing without some distortion, some self-conscious arrangement to make one thing weigh more heavily than another. Rewi Alley is not wholly an exception to this generalization, but he is by no means dumb, and the most cautious reader is impressed by his straightforwardness and sincerity, his Cromwellian ruggedness and irrepressible New Zealand humour.

Poets, particularly those who have nothing to offer us but their own literariness, are fond of imagining technical perfections which separate themselves, the skilful, the knowing, the accomplished, from those others who, with an obtuse impertinence and obstinate failure to recognize their own limitations, also attempt to write verse. I can imagine a number of New Zealanders who will find good reasons for sneering at Rewi Alley's verse, his 'blow-offs,' as he calls these poems. In our father's house are many mansions, and this structure, individual in its design, made for use rather than for pleasure, is not the less architecture of merit because it escapes conventional elegancies. (It also escapes conventional corruption.) The word 'blow-off' is revealing. For many poetry is not primarily a conscious art : it is a rag-bag of the emotions, the discarding of which gives its own release. *Gung Ho* is not great poetry, but it is poetry, and it has the merit that the form, often halting and prosaic enough, finely matches the intention and purposes of the writer.

The blemishes in the poetry in *Gung Ho* are mannerisms which would be just as irritating in prose : the persistence, for instance, with which Rewi Alley refers to himself, obliquely, as 'one.' The major blemish is the too-frequent appearance of cliches of thought (as well as cliches of language)—

'When there will be fewer dirty great bombs strewing the earth

With sickening wreckage, twisting the hearts of those
Who must drop them, in sadistic excitement . . . '

or

' . . . more lads who once had
Ideals, leaving them for new positions, new wealth, new fame.'

A good deal of the first piece, *Autobiography*, is acutely embarrassing to a reader who is anxious to make the most generous concessions to anyone who has done so much positive good in the world as Rewi Alley.

It is the purely descriptive passages of *Gung Ho* which are the best poetry. Rewi Alley does not separate human beings from ' nature,' and he can speak of both with a purity and a force which surprise and overwhelm us.

' Out to the country which rises up to the alps, so
Definite, so lofty and majestic, one would have thought
All who looked up at them would have become as free
And as great . . . '

or

' From the rubble, Nien Kwang Han
Picks up a saintly head, saintly lips carrying a
Superior saintly smile. ' Here's a wawa for you '
He shouts, and dumps the relic in the rubbish heap.'

It is the picture of things seen, the life lived, the crouching over the kerosene lamp surrounded by young Chinese, earnest and gay and drunk with hope, the journeys with the ' Yellow Fish,' the day-to-day anxieties and triumphs, the emotion surrounding a new generator or the famous sheep, which are memorable. It is the irreverent, insouciant energy—

' Co-operative days, co-operative nights,
Co-operative lice, co-operative fights,
Co-operatives that took root . . . ,'

unafraid of absurdity, unafraid of anything except that the hard word should be left unsaid. The faith in human beings and the duty to a high tradition of service, which few of those brought up in it honour in their lives, burst through the meagre vocabulary, the secondhand phraseology, the halting rhythms of these chopped off lines, and give them a crude vigour which more graceful and accomplished poets might envy.

This small book gives us an insight into both the character of Rewi Alley and the immense task he has set himself, fighting ignorance and poverty in the cold interior of China against the mountains of Tibet.

I envy a writer of verse who can help his meaning with notes. But with all this excellent explanation by Rewi Alley's friends it is a pity no one had room to explain what a Bailie school is and who Bailie was, the American missionary who exalted technical schools above testaments.

David Hall

RIPTIDE IN THE PACIFIC. A SYMPOSIUM. *Auckland University College Labour Club.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Riptide in the Pacific appeals for generous co-operation on New Zealand's part in the task of raising the standard of living of the Asians and the native people of the Pacific. It backs this plea with striking information showing the enormous gap between Asia's poverty and our relative luxury. It insists that there must be no political tags attached to any help given. On the question of the future of colonial peoples all the seven writers would, I think, agree with the introductory remark that 'time is running out against the old order of European domination' and that 'a general upsurge of national feeling' in the dependencies is to be noted and respected. Furthermore a plea is entered for a more liberal immigration policy, free from racial discrimination.

In an able introduction, the President of the Auckland University College Labour Club (C. A. McLaren) warns New Zealand of the perilous position in which it will be placed unless a different spirit prevails in international dealings. He is supported by six university lecturers. Here is the list:

Winston Rhodes: Power Politics in the Pacific; James Bertram: China and Japan; Maurice Lee: Southeast Asia; Keith Sinclair: Trusteeship and Pacific Destinies; S. Leathem: Economic Problems and Trends in the Pacific; Willis Airey: New Zealand and the Pacific.

The information given by Mr Leathem regarding the poverty of Asia, the high infant mortality and so forth is the sort of thing that every New Zealander should know. He recognizes that any help that this country can give is very small but can be significant. He suggests that New Zealanders should undertake to support the grand work of Rewi Alley in training young Chinese to take a lead in the technical and administrative work of the industrial co-operatives. May I add my testimony: I believe that Alley is building on the solid foundation of the best Chinese tradition of group loyalty.

Keith Sinclair deals with the problems of colonial dependencies with candour and originality. There are difficulties in the granting of full and immediate independence—which might often mean simply handing the control to native despots—and in trusteeship, as well as in the continuance of imperial rule from without.

In its small compass the booklet gives us much challenging thought and pertinent information. The struggle between the United States and Russia in the Far East is naturally one of its principal themes. There is severe criticism of the United States for its one-sided support of the Kuomintang regime in China and for 'what seems to be the American policy of rebuilding Japan as an anti-Soviet base.' It can hardly be denied that American policy in both the Eastern and the Western world has lately been of the nature of an undignified jig. Dancing on one foot, she seems intent on keeping the enemy of yesterday down; then she moves to the other foot and seems hesitantly inclined to lift these nations up in order to ensure that there shall be strong bastions against Russia's power. And

in China she has attempted to play the impossible dual role of mediator and helper of one side.

Some of our writers present the case against America forcibly but have no fault to find in Russia's Far Eastern policies. I shall try to show that there is something to be said on the other side. But I think it would be all to the good if New Zealanders could be induced to recognize the strength of the Communist position in the Far East. For instance, there has been surprising agreement among first-hand witnesses of the Chinese 'Communist' regime—if it can be so called—that its leaders are men of integrity and ability, whilst Chiang Kai-shek's Government is said to be riddled with corruption. Moreover it seems certain that the Communists received no aid from Russia during the war with Japan and for some time after. General Marshall himself declared in January 1947 that he knew of no evidence to the contrary. Again take the matter of racial discrimination : it has been faithfully repudiated by Russia, in word and deed, according to all the evidence that has come my way. Her record in this regard will come to have more significance as the coloured peoples come increasingly to resent being treated as pariahs.

Much more might be said. Winston Rhodes stresses Russia's 'power of attraction' over her neighbours. But Stalin was not content with innocent alluring when he entered into a secret agreement with Roosevelt and Churchill at Yalta whereby Russia was assured of a privileged position in China's richest industrial area—Manchuria. Perhaps we can best gauge Russia's neighbourliness by a short reviewing of her dealings with China and Manchuria.

Mr Rhodes, in his essay, mentions that the Soviet Union, after the first World War, renounced all privileges and concessions in foreign countries. The offer to China included the Russian-built, French-financed railway across Manchuria—the Chinese Eastern. But what happened afterwards? By 1924, when China at length recognized the Soviet Government, Russia was strong enough to claim a special privilege there. Joint Russo-Chinese control of the railway was agreed upon. Disputes arose and there was some fighting. Russia won, of course. When Manchuria was invaded by Japanese forces in 1931, Russia, though protesting, allowed Japanese troops to be carried over the railway. Later Russia offered to sell the Chinese Eastern—nominally to the puppet state of Manchukuo, but really to Japan. After long bargaining the sale was effected. Japan, through puppet Manchukuo, retained control of the region, including its railways, until 1945. It was in February of that year that Roosevelt and Churchill made their secret bargain with Stalin, promising Russia a large measure of control in Manchuria in return for Stalin's promise to come into the war against Japan at a later date. Control of the railways was to be shared with China. (One knows whose will prevails when the lion shares control with the lamb.) Port Arthur was to become again a Russian naval base, as it had been for some years before Tsarist Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905. Russia was to have a privileged position also in Dairen, the chief seaport of Manchuria. And with all this China was to have 'full sovereignty' in Manchuria! (Would someone please define 'full sovereignty'.) China was

to be asked to concur. She was asked and she concurred. But Stalin had been assured at Yalta that his claims would be fulfilled 'unquestionably.' In other words, the friend and ally, China, at whose expense and behind whose back the deal was arranged, had no choice. Chiang Kai-shek has stated recently that he signed the concurring treaty against his better judgment because of the commitments America had entered into at Yalta.

Riptide contains no mention of the Yalta deal, humiliating as it is alike to Britons, Americans and Russians—nor of other incidents that show the Soviet Union in an unfavourable light.

John A. Brailsford

THE MAORI PEOPLE AND US. Norman Smith. *Maori Purposes Fund Board and A. H. and A. W. Reed.* 15*s.*

MR SMITH believes that in New Zealand we have a Maori 'problem'. It is difficult to describe precisely just what this Maori problem is, but in general, the Maori are a problem because the white New Zealander does not understand them. Not understanding them the New Zealander builds up a mental picture or stereotype of what he thinks is typical Maori behaviour, and so we get the widespread picture of the Maori as feckless, happy-go-lucky, sensitive, aggressive, improvident, at times sullen and uncooperative. In other words the Maori does not appear to respond to the same values, the same standards, the same controls as the Pakeha. Therefore the Pakeha does not himself respond to customary expectations when he comes in close touch with the Maori. So there is a Maori problem.

To analyse the origin and development of this problem with the hope that understanding of the origin will make possible mutual toleration and understanding of present-day social and economic problems is the purpose of this book of Mr Smith. A lawyer and an experienced official of the Maori Department, an expert on Maori land tenure and deeply sympathetic with the hopes and aspirations of the Maori people, Mr Smith brings to his book-making job patience, affection and a dry-as-dust analysis. He has concentrated almost exclusively on the history of troubles over land. After introductory chapters on the Maori character, Maori society and chieftainship, Mr Smith quickly turns to land customs, land ownership and the disturbances introduced by the coming of the white men and the subsequent squabbles, steals, grabs by the Pakeha and resistances by the Maori. Through systematic combing of native court records and parliamentary papers, Mr Smith has turned up many interesting opinions which help us to understand the tangle of prejudice, motive, lack of motive, confusion, pressure and misjudgment which lead to the tragedy of the Maori wars. Many of these records and debates Mr Smith has presented in the form of an enlarged precis. We gain from this form of writing something of the colour of the time and the expression of personality—Judge Fenton for example appears wise, far-seeing and genuinely concerned over the way the Maori was receiving scant justice from politicians and settlers of his time—but some

of the precis are not brief enough, tend to be repetitious and therefore make for uninteresting reading. By the time the book is finished, however, the reader is likely to know as much as he will ever want to know about Maori land customs and the way in which the fight for Maori land has left a scar in the Maori mind and a guilt in that of the Pakeha.

We can be grateful to Mr Smith for his guidance through New Zealand's history of the past hundred years. At the same time we may doubt whether his diagnosis of the problem is completely correct and whether his prescription for healing the Maori-Pakeha troubles of our time is not more faith healing than scientific treatment. No one can deny that land is valued by the Maori. No one can deny either that at times memories of injustices over land colour the present for some Maori with the running sore of an ever-present injury. It is well for the Pakeha to try and see the Maori viewpoint over land. But if all injustices over land were righted it is most probable that there would still be a Maori problem as far as the Pakeha is concerned. And there always will be in New Zealand as long as the Pakeha does not appreciate the rationality (in so far as any culture is ever coherent and rationally organized), the systematic linking together of the current Maori design for living—only indirectly affected by memories over land, more importantly held together by adult ways of behaving supported by consistent upbringing of each Maori from birth onwards. Though this design for living changes from one generation to the next, it is still dominantly Maori and non-European. To understand this design as it functions now, to appreciate its strong and its weak points, to help the Maori decide what is going to be the future for this Maori way of life in New Zealand : this is the best way the Pakeha can help the Maori.

This understanding of a functioning design can only come about from a different approach to the Maori problem than the purely historical and from a many sided approach rather than one that limits itself to land only. Sir Apirana Ngata, in his foreword to Mr Smith's book, rightly remarks that injustices have to be cleared away before a new vision can arise. But the new vision itself has to be a vision seen through the lenses of scientific understanding, if the vision is to be clearly in focus. By some, scientifically based understanding is thought to be cold, hard, unsympathetic, the direct antithesis to a warm, intuitive, human understanding. This contrast is false in theory and more often false in fact than true. Whether an analysis of a problem is empirical or scientific, it will be no more human and understanding than the sympathies of the writer allow. The only difference is that the scientific approach to the Maori problem is likely to be more comprehensive and better balanced, because more dynamic, than the humanistic or the empirical.

Credit therefore to Mr Smith for the patience and care with which he leads us through the intricacies of the Maori land problem. Marks deducted for his liberal quotations from some of the more platitudinous essays of Emerson, his exhortatory addresses to both Maori and Pakeha, the occupational blinkers that make him see Maori-Pakeha relations almost entirely in terms of land struggles, land injustices and land tenures. The classic analysis of contemporary Maori-Pakeha misunderstandings has still

to be written. Mr Smith's work gives valuable leads for such an analysis, but it is far from being either a substitute or a stop-gap.

Ernest Beaglehole

NEW ZEALAND. Edited by Horace Belshaw. The United Nations Series. *University of California Press.*

THIS handsome and excellently printed book is not mainly addressed to a New Zealand audience. Yet so comprehensive a volume by writers 'all of whom are experts in their fields' is bound to attract many readers here, because it collects much useful information not often found in a single volume. But it does not contain much that is new; for the writers are usually summarizing ideas and material which they have published at greater length elsewhere. In a book largely intended for an overseas audience it is natural that the editor should have chosen familiar names for their special topics—Sutherland on the Maori, Sutch on Social Legislation, Campbell on Education, Beaglehole on the Discovery. He and his contributors too may well have felt that this was not the place for new views or even new slants. In result the book is mainly an accurate, careful recapitulation of academic conclusions on New Zealand life up to about 1945.

Without sharing in the all-too-common New Zealand habit of using the word academic as an all-purpose term of abuse it is perhaps permissible to regret that there are no lawyers, schoolteachers, journalists and politicians who might occasionally be called upon to write a judicious comment on some aspects of our national life and character.

For certainly there are academic failings as well as virtues. The careful and cautious writers of this book rarely tell us what New Zealanders are like. Yet when generalizations about—for instance—the structure of society are attempted one wonders whether it would have been good counsel to tempt the writers away from their statistics. Dr Sutch for instance when he writes—

'The tenants of state houses are not regarded as social inferiors but are envied. Waterfront workers, carpenters, clerks, postmen, university lecturers, and civil servants can and do live in one community in state houses.'

is not making any transparently false assertions. But the idyllic picture of the society which he contrives to conjure up scarcely does justice to the complexity of local snobberies.

There are a few other misleading statements. The ignorant reader would not gather a correct impression of New Zealand schools from Professor Belshaw's sentence 'the schools available to the children of wage earners are as good as those attended by the children of professional or business men.' Mr Campbell says that 'the policy of easy access to university studies and the lack of exacting entrance requirements have brought into the colleges many students of only modest ability.' Two pages earlier he has said that 'in accrediting students for entrance to the University the schools are inclined to set standards that are perhaps too high.' While

a formal reconciliation of these two statements may be possible there seems to remain a fundamental inconsistency of view. Nor has Mr Webb perhaps chosen quite *le mot juste* when he calls the debates in the House of Representatives ' severely matter of fact.' ' It can be maintained,' says Mr Webb, ' that there is an unusually high degree of competence and contentment in the New Zealand Public Service. Indeed there are few countries where the rank-and-file public servant is more justly treated and has better working conditions.' It seems doubtful whether the first sentence was wholly true even in 1946 when this article was presumably written.

To be judicial in evaluating the claims of one's own country to fame is no doubt difficult. There are not wanting signs in several articles that in the last ten years the traditional judgments on New Zealand's record, both domestic and international—and also on her notabilities, are set in too high a key. ' The New Zealand Liberal Party astonished the world;' ' perhaps the most notable of the literary works of the period . . . *Tutira* . . . probably has few rivals in English literature. Its intellectual grasp and imaginative power give it the status of an English classic '; Salmond ' the great lawyer . . . his voice was a majestic one '; Bell, the great and wise mind ; 'As a moral force in politics . . . New Zealand . . . at the San Francisco Conference of 1945 . . . had forgotten that it was a province of an Empire ; and, in forgetting, it had ceased to be one.' Such phrases are not omnipresent but they recur a little too frequently. In contrast it is refreshing to find that Mr Airey believes that ' New Zealand has attracted more attention than its actual importance probably deserves.'

' If you tell a New Zealand writer or painter,' says Mr Fairburn, ' that he should contribute to the evolution of a New Zealand idiom in his particular field he will, if he is worth his salt, agree with you . . . he will admit that this is the only honest and respectable choice, unless he is a careerist.'

Mr Fairburn here implies that the merits of a New Zealand writer or painter are dependent on his willingness to ' contribute to the evolution of a New Zealand idiom '—or perhaps that there is a moral duty incumbent on him to so contribute. Now it is admitted (and by Mr Fairburn as emphatically as anyone) that the New Zealand tradition in the arts is new and tenuous and that our overseas links for good and evil are still very strong ; but surely the way to strengthen the tradition is not by demanding an oath of cultural allegiance from aspiring artists before they are allowed out of the country, or requiring a certificate each year that they have carried out work on the evolution of the New Zealand idiom to the satisfaction of the appropriate Commissar. He may believe that if no cad breaks out of line—or as we would perhaps both prefer to put it—if the ghostly but vague loyalty which links the inspiration of New Zealand artists to their native land proves not too fragile—New Zealand literature may flourish the better. But that after all is only a theory about New Zealand literature. It is in fact likely that writing and painting would still be going on in New Zealand even if the hills were still waiting for Mr Holcroft.

A few tendentious passages which have the impress neither of careful scholarship nor of independent judgment but smack merely of partisan

claptrap mar the book. They occur in Mr Airey's contribution on New Zealand history (one paragraph only must bear this reproach, much of the rest is wise and scholarly) and in Dr Sutch's on Social Security. It is a pity too that Mr Campbell's quite able chapter on Education is so obviously an apology for reform. A detached criticism (even if sympathetic) of the achievements, as distinct from the aims, of New Zealand education is badly needed.

Blackwood Paul

THE POLITICS OF EQUALITY. Leslie Lipson. *University of Chicago Press.*

I

PROFESSOR Lipson has written a book for which those who make and administer New Zealand's laws should be no less grateful than the student of political and administrative institutions. The book treats of the historical evolution of the electoral system, political parties, the cabinet, the premiership, parliament, and the public service. The method adopted enables contemporary administrative and political problems to be examined in historical perspective, and the problems themselves are lucidly defined and shrewdly discussed. Finally, a successful effort is made to present the evolution of economic, political, and administrative institutions as part of an integral process of change.

The book is divided into two parts. The first covers the years 1840-1890. The second, which takes up almost three quarters of the work, deals with the period 1891-1947.

In the first part, Professor Lipson traces the evolution of the system of cabinet government in New Zealand. In general terms, the successful working of the cabinet system presupposes nation-wide political parties, the majority party in the legislature providing the personnel of cabinet, with the cabinet responsible for policy and administration to parliament, and, more important, to the electorate. Where the free flow of responsibility is impeded, difficulties will arise in the workings of the system. Thus where for any reasons the responsibility of the cabinet to the electorate is weak, there is the danger that cabinet will find itself at the mercy of the legislature : the consequence will be ' government by assembly,' with the corollary of a weak executive, lack of collective cabinet responsibility, and group alignments and intrigues within the House based on expediency and parochial ambitions.

Professor Lipson develops this theme throughout the first part of his book, and in doing so provides an admirable example of the way in which the study of history and of political science may be blended. For he has clearly validated the preceding a priori argument by an historical survey of government in New Zealand throughout these years. Moreover, in these pages, as throughout the remainder of the book, the argument is tersely summarized at key points by the use of statistical tables.

Until the early nineties New Zealaud lacked well organized political parties ; this resulted partly from a restricted suffrage throughout the

greater part of the period, partly from lack of communications, a lack which made for parochial enclaves rather than national community, and partly because of the political effects of a relatively undeveloped economy. The absence of nation-wide parties in turn tended to make successive cabinets dependent upon unpredictable alliances between groups in the House. The period therefore presents a picture of rapidly changing political allegiances within the legislature, and of equally rapid cabinet changes. Thus in the period 1856-90 there were twenty-five different cabinets ; in sharp contrast, since the nineties there have been nominally fifteen, and Professor Lipson gives reasons for believing that this figure might actually be reduced to six. Yet the earlier frequency of cabinet changes often masked a continuity of personnel ; in other words, the conditions which enabled the legislature to dominate the cabinet also impeded the development of a tradition of cabinet's collective responsibility. In brief, conditions closely resembled those that militated against parliamentary institutions in the France of the Third Republic and in demo-liberal Italy. Fortunately for New Zealand, the difficulty here did not spring from any deep-rooted cultural or religious cleavages, but from temporary conditions of an external kind ; the limited suffrage, the poor communications, and the undeveloped economy. Time easily remedied these deficiences, and as this happened New Zealand-wide political parties emerged, based on clearly defined programmes and capable of sustaining stable governments. With these developments the period of evolution ended and we move with Professor Lipson to the period of achievement.

The pressures behind this evolution were economic. In this first period political power had virtually been monopolized by large land-owners, and used largely for their class-interest. Opposed to this squattocracy stood an increasing number of land-hungry men, the early opponents of land-monopoly and champions of economic equality. Moreover, a depression in the eighties followed by the later effects of refrigeration upon the economic and social structures, meant that their cry for equality found an echo among an increasing urban population. The introduction of universal male suffrage meant that government had to respond to the demands of these groups, and the Liberal Party emerged to transform this demand for economic equality and security into legislation. This situation created the opportunity for the cabinet quickly to master the legislature by basing itself primarily upon the support of the electorate ; and concurrently, as a result of the same pressures, there occurred a strong tendency to centralize administrative and political controls, a tendency which has continued with gathering momentum.

The land-hungry, having gained their objective, became conservative in political outlook ; but the growth in numbers and influence of the urban industrial population led to increasing demands for further instalments of State socialism. This split the quondam allies of town and country and sapped the foundations of the Liberal Party. Professor Lipson makes an interesting comparison between this situation and that which the Labour Party has found itself in since 1935 ; for it too has depended for its success at the polls upon this same town-country alliance.

The irresistible electoral pressure, persistently pushing governments into the nooks and crannies of social and economic life, has in turn caused New Zealand's political institutions to become stream-lined. A system of unitary government has developed, under which the cabinet has ridden rough-shod over all formal checks; thus the powers of the governor-general have been whittled away, the legislature has been transformed into an instrument of cabinet, while since 1891 the Legislative Council has survived as a not very ornamental ornament—and our functional age grows increasingly rude about ornaments.

Yet at one important point there has been a dismal failure to adapt New Zealand's institutions to this new situation. 'The government in New Zealand,' says Professor Lipson, 'is carrying out mid-twentieth-century functions with nineteenth century tools. Its functions have outgrown its structure.' (p.370) Perhaps the most penetrating part of the work consists in the critical analysis of the present administrative system, the lucid exposure of its weaknesses, and the persuasive outline for reform that is suggested. Closely connected with this criticism of present administrative machinery is the argument that the enormous increase in the powers and responsibilities of government has not been accompanied by anything like a commensurate increase in the capacities of ministers; indeed, as the power of cabinet has expanded, the intellectual quality of its members has decreased (p.292). The conclusion drawn about the quality of the legislature is of much the same kind, and prompts the warning:

'A representative democracy which does not produce a better legislature than this one is running a serious risk.' (p.364)

But, it might be asked, if government is all-powerful, why increase the quality of the legislature? What incentive is there for able men to offer themselves as rubber-stamps? In fact, as distinct from theory, Parliament neither does nor can make laws or control the public purse; what useful activity, then, is left?

'Surely this: it (Parliament) can and must serve as a public forum for the presentation of criticism and the ventilation of grievances . . . Complaints about the declining usefulness of Parliament frequently overlook the greatest service it can perform. Whenever anything is done to strip it of its opportunities for ventilating grievances, then democracy will indeed have been wounded in a mortal spot.' (p.350)

We are faced, then, with the problem of deciding how best to make the legislature 'the centre and the focus for the critical inquiries and the constructive energies of an alert democratic opinion.' (p.350) Some interesting arguments are given, incidentally, to suggest that one means to this end would be to extend the life of Parliament from three to four years. But the real difficulty is this: how are we to focus 'critical inquiries' and 'constructive energies' that are conspicuously absent throughout the electorate?

The preceding question is not posed by Professor Lipson, but it is implied throughout his final chapter. There he evaluates the social results of New Zealand's experiment in State Socialism, and awards generous praise to the widespread economic welfare, security, and equality that

has been achieved. These gains, however, have been made at a heavy price : not only has security weakened social incentives and initiative, but a too exclusive concern for equality has produced a pervasive mediocrity in intellectual and spiritual life, has made for a suspicion of merit and intelligence, and encouraged a mass intolerance of what John Stuart Mill called *individuality*. As for achievements in the arts, Professor Lipson concedes that Katherine Mansfield wrote good prose : ' the rest is (or should be!) silence.' He seems to regard our social security achievements as 'fragments . . . shored against ' our ruins.

II

So much for the general theme. The argument is lucidly presented, supported by a wealth of illustrative material drawn from Hansard and various Parliamentary Commissions, and often gains from Professor Lipson's first-hand knowledge of contemporary ministers and administrators.

And now for the ' buts.' Professor Lipson's work raises many ' buts'. This is a good thing ; after all, a book should be an incentive to thought, not a substitute for thought.

Take first the diagnosis of New Zealand's impoverished and too uniform aesthetic and spiritual life. This, says Professor Lipson, springs from an excessive quest for equality, and by way of prescription he suggests that we reconsider the case for liberty. At points the argument is well sustained, and in particular the way in which too great a concern for equality has played havoc with administrative efficiency is clearly brought out. Yet on the whole Professor Lipson blames equality ' for labours not her own.'

Professor Lipson has, for example, contrasted the American emphasis upon liberty with the New Zealand emphasis upon equality. Despite this difference of emphasis, however, is not ' the dulling effect of the mass mind ' and ' the worship of averages ' (p.493) as noticeable in America as in New Zealand? Consequently, it would appear that the search for equality is not at any rate peculiarly associated with these sorry results. This suspicion once raised, the conclusion easily follows that it is not an excessive emphasis upon equality that matters, but the kind of equality sought. Thus, if the formal idea of equality is filled with a narrow utilitarian content, so that material comforts are assigned too great an importance, the passion for social equality is likely to be confused with a complacent acceptance of mediocre uniformity. On the other hand, there has been no more ardent equalitarian than St Paul (I am not forgetting his remarks about women!) : but a Christian equalitarianism, so wide as to include the whole human family within its sweep, has somehow avoided the ' worship of averages.' It would seem, then, that it is not the ' dose ' of equality that matters, but rather the kind or quality of equality that in the main is sought.

True, in several passages Professor Lipson touches on this issue ; for example, he is critical of the way in which success ' fills the place that is vacant of principle ' (p.494). The reader, however, is left uncertain as to the precise principle with which Professor Lipson would fill the ' vacant place.' There is mention of ' Beauty', and ' the value of gracious, humanized

living '; but many of his readers will feel that the experiences of our century suggest the need for more dependable defences against the onslaughts of barbarism. Again, and this point grows out of the preceding vagueness, Professor Lipson's explanation of why New Zealanders attach too great an importance to utility and success is not persuasive. There is doubtless some truth in his argument that our narrow utilitarian aims are a survival from penurious pioneering days, when bread and butter considerations were necessarily foremost, and that these aims ' have outlived their origins and settled into tradition ' (p.494). But in point of fact, local conditions merely reinforced a tradition that the pioneers brought with them ; for they came from an England in which men had no other gods but Bentham. This secularist philosophy, in turn, stemmed from a centuries-old evolution of ideas, so that the grounds of New Zealand's cultural and spiritual life must be looked for in causes predating the foundations of this colony by many generations.

The same point may be made in a different way. Professor Lipson has drawn attention to an essential sameness about New Zealand political parties, despite label differences. In other words, the dull uniformity underlies party divisions and bickerings. Is not the explanation once more found in a common acceptance of narrow utilitarian standards? Take, for example, the New Zealand Liberal Party. In all but name, the party was not liberal. In 1876 the liberals defended Provincial rights, a policy that *could* have been held on liberal grounds ; yet in the nineties the liberals led the way in centralizing political and administrative machinery, and set the pace for a programme of State socialism. Whether they acted wisely or not is beside the present point ; the plain fact is that a policy of centralization that ignores the need for imposing checks on the central power is not a liberal policy.

The truth is that throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there is evident in Anglo-Saxon politics a widening gap between liberal parties and liberal principles. The principles of English liberalism derive immediately from Puritanism, with its affirmation of the absolute value of human personality, a value grounded in Christian faith. This affirmation of the equality of men in the eyes of God provided the basic ground of liberal egalitarianism. On the other hand, man could only serve God in and through a free, or voluntary, conformity to His will. Thus the affirmation of equality involved a demand for religious liberty, a demand quickly extended to the political sphere. Hence, the liberal political philosophy posited no antithesis between equality and liberty, so that the more you had of the one the less you had of the other, but the defence of liberty grew logically from the content given to the idea of equality. This demand for liberty in turn led to derivative demands that safeguards be imposed against a too great concentration of political power. But between the seventeenth century and the settlement of New Zealand the foundations of English liberalism shifted from a religious to a secular basis ; and by the latter date the liberal fort had in the main been sold to ' the bitch goddess success.' Yet one important formal aspect of the older tradition survived ; and this survival is found in the utilitarian claim that each must count for one, and no one for more

than one. Men are no longer considered equal because of a common spiritual nature, however, but because of their equal capacity to enjoy the fruits of 'progress.' These ideas found fairly widespread acceptance among the lower middle-class, from whom New Zealand's pioneers were largely recruited, and local conditions served as their natural forcing house. In the event, the terms liberty and equality, no longer defined by reference to man's spiritual nature, have tended to play the role of Tweedledum and Tweedledee fighting about a brand new rattle; for only too often the notion gains ground that A's 'liberty' to own a motor car is a violation of bicyclist B's claim to 'equality.' Government is therefore used to impose an increasing measure of uniformity, and the result is called equality. Amidst this too prevalent uniformity, voices from time to time are heard bemoaning—more in anger than in sorrow—the whereabouts of culture. And the suggestion is not slow in coming that cabinet should entice her from her hiding place by a grant-in-aid! Truly, our age 'is beset by a plague of politics; there has been far too much of it for comprehension, leave alone consideration; and a good deal of the affliction springs from the notion that when things do not run smoothly, the remedy is to pass more laws, make more rules, issue more orders. The prescription does not seem to have worked. The diagnosis must go deeper.'*

These remarks lead to my next point. Professor Lipson has said practically nothing about local government. This is a conspicuous gap. After all, the stream-lined political machine whose construction is so brilliantly described in these pages is potentially so efficient as to raise qualms. One aspect of the problem is forcibly brought out in Professor Lipson's comment:

'All too often the leading difference between governments of opposite party colours seems to be this—that there are different sets of friends who prosper.' (p.486)

If this verdict is perhaps a little harsh, there is another danger that is disposed of too easily. The centralization of power can in itself constitute as grave a threat to democracy as the shortcomings of those who exercise that power; and this danger will not diminish, even though the power be administered with integrity and impartiality. The danger is that a highly centralized democracy, administering a policy of ever-widening social services, easily

'contents itself with scattering broadcast rights and benefits whose gratuitous character destroys their value in advance, and whose dissipation is prompted by the fact that their value is neither felt nor understood. Such a policy is calculated to hinder the education of the people, to make them pay for material wealth by spiritual poverty, and to teach them the demoralizing habit of trust in a social providence that spares them the trouble of looking after themselves.'†

The problems raised by bureaucratic government are vexed problems;

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* W. A. Orton, *The Liberal Tradition*, p.39.

† Guido de Ruggiero, *European Liberalism*, p.373.

and many foolish and ill-grounded fears are stimulated by those who themselves have no real interest in self-government, but rather in their own profits and ambitions. But the questions involved are both important and urgent; and many readers will feel that Professor Lipson has touched those problems in their local setting with too light a touch (cf., for example, his remarks at p.484).

There is a case for arguing that as the traditional checks upon the cabinet have disappeared (the powers of the governor-general, legislature, and legislative council), the more urgent has grown the need to build local institutions that will afford a balance to the strong central power. Professor Lipson reminds us that there are some seven hundred local authorities in New Zealand; he might well have added that at the local level this situation denotes political apathy and confusion, rather than a democracy with vigorous roots widely spread throughout the localities. The Report of the Select Committee on Local Government (1945), and the subsequent official action based on that report, offer the data for an analysis that would have provided a welcome additional chapter to *The Politics of Equality*.

Few will disagree with Professor Lipson when he complains about the casual treatment meted out to the Immigration Department by successive governments. Fairly widespread agreement will also doubtless be given to his claim for a vigorous immigration policy on the grounds of (*a*) defence, and (*b*) the need to improve the quality of our culture. But are these reasons persuasive? Precisely how many people would we need to defend New Zealand in this age of atomic warfare? As for the second point, New Zealanders pride themselves on their small numbers when pointing to achievements in social legislation, but when culture is mentioned they point protestingly to the paucity of their numbers. In point of numbers, however, does New Zealand compare so unfavourably with the Athens of Aeschylus and Plato, the England of Shakespeare, the Florence of Dante and Michelangelo? Again, if it is conceded that numbers have some relevance, are we to set about importing foreign 'culture bearers' to the exclusion of those who have no claim to this rarified label? There is reason to fear that Sam Goldwyn's girls might get all the passages, to the exclusion of Graham Greene! It would be foolish to suggest that self-interest should not influence immigration policy; but ought not the citizens of a vocally egalitarian society to balance this consideration with a sense of obligation towards, say, the unfortunate European peasants who, being men and women, are in all essentials our equals. Have we no duties to consider, as well as a culture to lament?

These criticisms mainly concern points of interpretation which Professor Lipson has placed upon that evolution of New Zealand's political and administrative institutions so brilliantly presented in the great body of the work. For this scholarly and eminently readable narrative, in the course of which most of the outstanding problems besetting modern democracy are raised and discussed in their New Zealand setting, we should, to repeat my beginning, be grateful.

E. A. Olssen

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor

Sir : A year ago or thereabouts I sent you my comments on *Landfall*. You may recall that I expressed concern at a certain amount of lopsidedness—a predilection for the rough-hewn and the coarse-grained. I doubt if you believed that such comment was reasonably well-founded.

May I therefore illustrate my point. Here is a list of the short stories and allied fictional contributions to date :

A Smile on Sunday, James Courage (June 1947).
Alison Hendry, Jan Godfrey (June 1947).
Free Rides for Soldiers' Brides, John Reece Cole (Sept. 1947).
Social Catharsis, Bill Pearson (December 1947).
Daphne, D. R. Adsett (December 1947).
The Glass Wig, Bruce Mason (December 1947).
No Traveller Returns, F. A. Maguire (March 1948).
What Images Return, J. F. McDougall (March 1948).
And the Glory, D. W. Ballantyne (June 1948).
Include me out, G. R. Gilbert (September 1948).
A Rented Room, P. J. Wilson (September 1948).
After the Earthquake, James Courage (December 1948).

Twelve contributions and eleven authors. In this land of ours, clean and beautiful as it is in its nature, predominantly decent in its communities, possessed of a fine strain of clean-cut heroism running through the everyday incidents of its story (not in war alone, but on the beaches, in fires and other disasters, in mines and mills) what have these authors singled out? What have they seen? What have they felt an urge to give out to us?

A lantern thrown down the hole of a privy, a cow dying in a bog, a bloated corpse bobbing in the sea, a drunk (no, several drunks), a woman dying of painful disease, a ' greasy bastard,' a dozen or so of other ' buggers ' and ' bastards '—good life, sir! I find I have covered ten of the twelve contributions in this short paragraph.

You would like me to continue my subscription to *Landfall*. I for my part would like to give that helping hand to the rise of New Zealand arts. But to my mind ' rise ' is hardly the word to associate with such a remarkable preponderance of sludge-hole excursions. What do you offer me in return for my 1949 subscription? If your only answer is ' the same ten-twelfths mixture as heretofore ' please count me out. I hope you have a different answer and I await it.

N. S. Woods

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Arnold Wall. *The Pioneers and Other Poems.* A. H. and A. W. Reed. 15s.

Richard Price. *A Review of the Principal Questions in Morals.* Edited by D. Daiches Raphael. Oxford. 15s.

G. M. Henderson. *Taina.* H. H. Tombs Ltd. 8s. 6d.

Kiwi 1948. Edited by Maurice Duggan. Students' Association, Auckland University College.

Nicholas Mansergh. *The Commonwealth and the Nations.* Royal Institute of International Affairs. 8s. 6d.

Protocol. A Quarterly of New Writing. Edited by H. and C. Horwood. Protocol Press, St John's, Newfoundland. No. 5. Fall 1948. One dollar per year.

Donald Cowie. *The Collected Poetical Works, Vol.* 2. The Tantivy Press, Malvern. 10s. 6d.

Notes on Contributors

ERNEST BEAGLEHOLE. Professor of Psychology, Victoria University College. Author of *Property*, and (with Pearl Beaglehole) *Some Modern Maoris*, *Islands of Danger*, etc.

JOHN A. BRAILSFORD. Trained as a journalist in N.Z. and San Francisco. Went to China in 1911 and became editor of the *Central China Post* at Hankow; during the Sun Yat-sen revolution there reported for the American Associated Press and Reuter's. Imprisoned in N.Z. as a conscientious objector, 1917-19. Assistant editor, *Stead's Review*, Melbourne, 1919-22 ; assistant editor, *Japan Chronicle*, Kobe, 1922-26. Recently Director of Adult Education in Otago, retired in 1948.

LORNA CLENDON. Born in 1923, lives in Wellington.

ARNOLD F. GOODWIN. Born in England 1889 and came to N.Z. in 1912. Formerly director of Applied Art, Elam School of Art; producer for the Auckland W.E.A. Dramatic Club; founded and built the Goodwin Marionette Theatre, 1938; producer and director, Community Arts Service drama, 1947-48.

DAVID HALL. Born 1909. Director of Adult Education, University of Otago.

PAUL HENDERSON. Born in North Canterbury, educated in Australia, aged 34.

JOHN KELLY. Irish-born, 1922, early exported; a graduate of Auckland University College, served in the army overseas.

E. A. OLSSEN. Formerly a tutor-organizer for Adult Education in Auckland, since 1948 lecturer in Political Science at the University of Otago.

JANET PAUL. Born in Auckland 1919, graduate of Victoria University College. Has taught school, and designed books for the Department of Internal Affairs.

THEO SCHOON. Painter, born in Java 1915, studied in Holland, France and Germany, and painted for several years in Bali. Came to N.Z. in 1939. Began recording South Island rock paintings in 1946 and recently started exploring the North Island for others.

GEORGE SWAN. Honorary Secretary of the Wellington Repertory Theatre since 1934, President of the N.Z. Drama Council for the past two years.

NOTES

I

In 1946 a committee of the New Zealand Library Association, convened by Dr G. H. Scholefield, then librarian of the General Assembly Library, drew up a report on the censorship of books. It was published in *New Zealand Libraries*, the Association's bulletin, in November 1946.

The report states that although 'unalterably averse to the censorship of books on qualitative grounds,' the Association yet feels that censorship in some degree has come to stay in New Zealand, and is of opinion that it can be justified on two grounds only:

'1. To safeguard public morals and prevent the corruption of youth (which may be through indecency, obscenity or by the glorification of gangsterism and youthful lawlessness).

2. To prevent incitement to violence (or subversion).

The danger from this second ground we think has been considerably exaggerated. Direct incitement to violence should be prohibited, but it is much more likely to be attempted through radio or fugitive pamphlets (imported or from a secret press) than through books brought in from abroad. The danger is that such a censorship might be applied in a political sense, and we are firmly of opinion that there should be no censorship of opinion, whether political or scientific, religious or philosophical. There should be no interference with partisan political literature so long as it does not advocate violence.'

Further, the Association is opposed 'to any censorship being exercised as an arbitrary act of a state department'; and 'no customs officer (or police officer) should have power to seize a book which is not on the proscribed list.'

Some while earlier, the report continues, a censorship board or advisory committee on literary censorship had been set up by the government to adjudicate upon books seeking entry into New Zealand. This had not worked well, and the committee therefore recommended:

'That if the prohibition of any publication is contemplated

the matter should be referred to an advisory board of three members who should be free of political or commercial influence and chosen for their intelligence, integrity and impartiality.

That appeals against the decisions of such a board should be heard by an appeal censor, who should be a legal person of high standing.

That decisions of the censors should be communicated forthwith to the New Zealand Library Association (*or* the principal librarians) and the New Zealand Booksellers Association.

That the New Zealand Censorship Board should co-operate closely with similar authorities in the British Dominions and the United States with a view to obtaining early information and advance copies of doubtful publications.

That there should be no prosecution in respect of a publication which has been passed by the Censorship Board.'

The report contains other points of importance which there is no space to touch on here; it is a considered and responsible statement, in which the committee is careful to mention that neither librarians nor booksellers nor any other sectional interest has claims over-riding that of the general public to be represented on the censorship board.

A copy of the report was forwarded to the Prime Minister and the Association was informed as early as August 1946 that it was receiving the consideration of the Minister of Customs.

It is now May 1949 and nothing has yet been heard from the Minister of Customs. Meanwhile the censorship continues as before. Within the country it is exercised chiefly under the Indecent Publications Act 1910, which prohibits the publication of all indecent material. This is a fairly liberal act and there have been few prosecutions under it.

But a very different kind of censorship is exercised by the Customs Department. Section 46 of the Customs Act 1913 prohibits the importation of ' all indecent documents within the meaning of the Indecent Publications Act 1910, and all other indecent or obscene articles.' It seems that the Department does not need to show that a publication is indecent within the meaning of the Act; it can simply put it on a list of banned publications and keep it out of the country without being called to account. Any publication, whatever its subject, could be labelled indecent and kept out of the country in this way; and since the Minister

of Customs has final responsibility in the matter, governments would seem to be free to censor what they will.

Of course booksellers or libraries could challenge the Customs Department's action in stopping a publication, and could bring an action requiring it to show cause. But they do not: it would be putting a heavy burden on them to expect them to; and no doubt they would find it awkward to fall foul of the Customs. So that, in practice, the Department has greater power than a judge, who can order a book to be banned only if it infringes the law.

Yet if one copy of a book on the banned list could be smuggled into the country, and a New Zealand edition of it published from that copy, the book could circulate freely; for unless there was a good case against it under the Indecent Publications Act, the police would not prosecute.

What then is the Act for, if the Customs Department has these extraordinary powers to prevent literature entering the country? Surely no book should be banned until it has been proved indecent within the meaning of the Act.

The Department however keeps not only one list, but two. Publications named on the second list are allowed into the country, but 'may be delivered on the understanding that no guarantee is given that action will not be taken by the police if any offence in respect of them is subsequently committed'—that is, under the Indecent Publications Act. This seems to imply that all other publications entering the country are covered by some 'guarantee.' But there is no such guarantee: there could not be. Any publication, whether listed or not, may be the subject of prosecution if it is held to be offensive under the Act. The purpose of this second list is therefore obscure. It seems very like a form of intimidation, designed to scare nervous booksellers so that they will not touch books which the Department lists.

Both lists, or periodical supplements to them, are issued to libraries and to members of the Booksellers Association. The lists are marked *Confidential;* and there is no appeal against them except to the Minister himself. The Department's activities are thus well covered.

And who is the Customs Department to decide what we shall read or not? Has the Minister himself time to go through books and deliver judgment on them? If not, what official does the job?

What official decided that Dan Davin's novel *For the Rest of our Lives* should be placed on the ' no guarantee ' list? Or is the list a means of fobbing off influential busybodies who put pressure on ministers or officials to stop us reading publications which they dislike? If so, that is one more reason for introducing without delay a system of censorship under which pressure groups shall have as little influence as possible.

At the time of writing, *For the Rest of our Lives* remains on the list. It is odd that a book which, in General Kippenberger's review in *The Listener*, received what almost amounted to an official imprimatur, as a picture of the New Zealand Division in North Africa, should be listed by a government department as hardly fit for New Zealanders to read.

The book has of course been very widely read: it is still on the shelves of public libraries, and we may hope to see it again in the bookshops, despite the ' no guarantee.' Any attempt to prosecute booksellers handling it would bring ridicule upon those concerned. Let Mr Nash keep it on his list; it may help to remind him of his own words to the Associated Booksellers of New Zealand in 1936: ' We need no censorship . . . There is no one who can say what his neighbour should read. It is a restriction on the rights of a subject to suggest that a citizen should not have access to books which some board of censorship says are not for him.'

Unless his views have changed, is it not time that Mr Nash resurrected the report of Dr Scholefield's committee and took some action to reform the present censorship system, which in its secrecy and irresponsibility is too reminiscent of those despotisms with which New Zealand conditions are so often contrasted.

II

IN THE Seventh Pacific Science Congress, which met in Auckland and Christchurch at the end of the summer (Professor Sutherland describes it on another page), New Zealanders took part on an equal footing with their colleagues from abroad. The visitors had something to tell the natives; but the natives, this time, had something to tell the visitors too. That is perhaps, for us, the

chief interest of the Congress. It may be said to mark a step towards New Zealand's intellectual maturity: this country has now something to give in the intellectual sphere.

In the arts also, the other half of that sphere, we are no longer simply receivers. While the Science Congress was meeting here, Miss Ngaio Marsh's Canterbury Student Players were touring Australia in *Othello* and *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Although this was planned as a university venture, to play to university audiences, it was not financed by Canterbury College, but by Mr D. D. O'Connor. The result justified the risk which he took, and he deserves our gratitude. For the company was received, by Australian theatre-goers generally, with surprise and acclaim, and must have given them a new idea of New Zealand. Those who saw its final rehearsals in Christchurch will not wonder at that; it had a warmth and vitality very rare on the New Zealand stage, together with a professional balance and ease almost as rare. The combination is one which only a gifted and experienced producer can achieve.

Ngaio Marsh's company on its tour was New Zealand's nearest approach yet to an (unofficial) national theatre. As Mr Pocock maintains in this issue, any permanent theatre will necessarily have close links with such groups of players as she has trained at Canterbury College, groups firmly rooted in local interest and demand. The need for a national theatre, in the sense of a large expensive organization comparable to the National Orchestra and requiring big theatres to play in, is still unproven. Mr Alec McDowell's statement in the *Arts Year Book* for 1948 should be remembered: ' The proper way to start a self-supporting professional theatre in this country is to begin in a shack and travel with a tent.'

It would be better for New Zealand to go without a state-supported theatre than to repeat the experience of the National Orchestra. That unhappy body seems to have been ordered about by the government or the Broadcasting Service as though it were someone's private band. The best part of it was rudely snatched away for six months from a ' conductor ' who apparently had so little status that he was powerless to assert its independence and keep it together; indeed he has been little better than a puppet, set up, in face of the united musical opinion of the country, by a government which ignores him at its pleasure.

The Orchestra must be kept going somehow; with independence, under a strong conductor, it may in time still realize the hopes that have been entertained of it (Miss Mary Martin on a later page suggests how).

For any form of national theatre, independence is equally necessary: freedom from political or departmental interference. It would be better to wait until there is a body of artists strong enough in prestige to claim as of right both state support and independence, than to rush headlong into some doubtful scheme merely because the government of the day is willing. Governments are always ready to erect monuments to themselves, of one kind or another; but, as the case of the Orchestra shows, unless put up with the greatest care, they are liable to collapse prematurely.

Noel Ginn

The Mates

AT FIRST in the very beginning as they say
We were bound and wound in a schoolboy mutual
Trance which impelled us to meet and chatter and play

Time we corrupted thinking to enrich the spell
Little knowing no one goes scot-free
We never thought the neighbour's boy would tell

But then we were terribly young and foolish you see
He told the Jersey bull over the bridge
And hinted what happened to a cabbage tree

But kept it from Them because of a sort of pledge
That every knowing and secretive schoolboy swore
So teacher father mother had no knowledge

And we went to tech and ran and swam as before
At Christmas we camped up the river and once all night
Played cards with Dick and Reuben Tanginoa

Another time just as it was getting light
We found ourselves walking back from a Maori dance
Stumbling back through five miles of bush quite

Played out and slept till three which fact enhanced
The outing someone was rolling under a karaka
Through overeating then Bessie and Dick announced

Their marriage no ring wedding or registrar
River days we stretched out near the tent
Ate greengages and played chess Don I remember

Insisting on book openings blurred our enjoyment
Ha-ing with his French Defence and Giuoco Pianos
We explored and swam half the day was spent

Chewing economics religion and Plato's
Absolutes: sometime round about then
It must have happened but how no one knows

As though unawares we were set on a mountain
Back to back at the ridge point of a watershed
Each by a cliff and gorge then summer rain

And the journies began alone each one sped
Headlong into multitudinous inward life
Acquiring wives of preoccupation instead
Of mates and they since then have held us aloof.

James K. Baxter

Sestina

TO MY WIFE

Now as the nights lengthen and the placid season
Ages to decay, we can hear, my love
(Waiting with window flowers, a wood fire flaring across
The small safe room)—we can hear the rawhead
Elegies of winter in the wind striding perilous
From antarctic, ravening where our days lie tangled.

Against that ice colossus, I recall now the tangled
Wild bush at Silverstream in the picnic season.
You bathed there laughing, where deep and perilous
Under clay banks the creek ran. With sharpened love
I saw the child swell under your dress: the fountainhead
Of our content was plain, Time's enmity no cross.

And under the bridge shaken where lorries cross
And stones are flood-scum white with briars tangled
Among them—kids had scrawled an ogre's head
And crooked thigh, graffiti of a season
More innocent than ours, whose adult love
Walks in the night, naked and perilous.

Like Bors we come to the Chapel Perilous,
Torn arches, sunken tomb and ruined cross.
This is where our too-long-buried love
Festering waits renewal. Against night's terror tangled
No charm avails; here in a dry season
A generation stands, cloud thundering overhead.

For symbol take the maori coffinhead
Seen under glass, proclaiming perilous
The grief and horror of an older season
Purged perhaps long since by the mission cross;
Yet big with death, emerges from the tangled
Archaic night, dwarfing our human love.

So too in the small death of parting, love,
When the ferry stirred gigantic, turning her head
Seaward. My heart, my very breath entangled
With yours, drawn out to fragile perilous
Threads of longing stretching across
The darkened Strait and the autumnal season.

May Time season our too wincing love
With the humour of the Cross, sparing your fortunate head
And in a perilous age our skein of peace untangled.

P. S. Wilson

Round the World

CALM days, over rare waters,
Under the eye of the Dancer,—
White sails, blue skies:
Small winds dancing, and bathers
Over the side,—head, shoulders,
In the sun, and then, drop,
Down, far into the wide sea.
There's a small home of water
Round the boat's side, and birds,
Gulls—there are a dozen kinds—
Sail past, or pause, and watch
With heads poking down
And the strong white wings
Holding the currents of air.
Sound and reflection make boundaries for us,
But at midday a great calm
Unfolds the infinite surface of the sea,
And even those natural signs
Of ownership of water, fade out
As they should do, and nothing
Remains save the soft wind dancing.

We have sailed past islands
Or for days without sight of land.
Strange, huge fish have
Followed us, and the strangest birds.
You will not know what we have felt
But our minds have returned often to you.
There have been coastlines
That took us through marvellous patterns
And shapes of movement,
Going as we do this strange crab-fashion,
And watching the far-off headland
Or turning to the white sighing shore.
We have worked like fools
In the harder kinds of seaweather,
But on the calm days
There were none who could be so idle
Or wander through the future, talking
Slow hour by slow drifting hour.

Storm days, meeting huge seas,
Under the eye of the Fury,—
Bare mast, leaden air.
We are sailing a covered world,
From south to north, and south,
And the green high hills
Go rolling down the land,
Capped with salt-grey foliage
And leaves blown across our minds
Like gusts in a sheltered valley.
And then in the southern Spring
There are white clouds high
And familiar music leads
The wind, by the gay, green fields:
Coming up the harbour.

Rainer Maria Rilke: Duineser Elegien

English version by *James Bertram*

The Fourth Elegy

O TREES of Life, o when in winter mood?
We are not singleminded, have no instinct
like migratory birds. Surprised and late
we give ourselves abruptly to the winds
and fall at random on indifferent ponds.
We know both blossomtime and withering.
And somewhere still go lions, unaware
with kingly look of any impotence.

But we already on our most single purpose
feel the projection of another. Hatred
still is our nearest neighbour. Even lovers
tread still together down their narrow gyres
who looked for dreaming shores, the hunt, and home.
The reproduction of a single moment
needs all this ground of contrast, wrought with anguish
that we might see it: life deals so precisely
with us. We never know the contour of feeling,
but only know what shapes it from outside.
Who has not sat alone, a timid spectator,
before the curtain of his own heart? And when
it lifted at last, the scenery was farewell.
Easy to grasp. The too-familiar garden
wavering softly: and only then came the dancer.
(Not *he*, though.) Enough. For yet with all his flair
he is disguised, and he becomes a bourgeois
and goes into his own house through the kitchen.
I never liked these gaping half-filled masks—
puppets, smooth rounded puppets, are better. I'll
hold out their bulging cases, the wires and the staring
doll's face. Here. Look, I am in front!

And even if the lamps go out, and somebody says
to me then, 'No more!'—if, on the darkened stage,
emptiness comes with a grey breath of air,
and of all my silent ancestors not one any longer
sits with me there, no woman's form, not even
the little brown-eyed boy with the squint, yet I
shall stay. For me there will always be a performance.

Am I not right? You who learnt to know bitterness
tasting and testing my earliest years, my father
(and still, when I had grown to manhood, tasted
that first wry draught of my compulsion, soured
with after-taste of such an alien future,
and made your rules upon my stricken childhood)
o father, since you died, you are afraid
in me so often, deep within my desires,
and try to give me that serenity the dead have,
kingdoms of serenity for the scrap of fate that is me:
am I not right? Am I not right? You tell me,
all you who loved me once for the little beginning
of love that I had for you, and yet always lost it
because the presence I loved in your face passed over
to the wider presence of space itself, and in that you
were no longer distinct . . . O if I might
then wait before the puppet-stage, no rather
gaze deep deep through it, till to break the spell
of my long gazing, an Angel must come at last
to tread the boards and lift on high the puppets—
Angel and doll! There is a play at last.
For then will come together what's always parted
so long as *we* are there. Then will be drawn
at last the final circle of all the changes
of our years and seasons. Over us, over and on
the Angel will play. See, the dying, may they not
guess at the last how much of it all is illusion
that we do here in the world? Everything here
is not itself. O hours out of childhood,
behind the moving figures, more than shadows
of things gone by, no future yet before us!
We had to grow up though, and sometimes yearned

just to be big, like those we were half in love with
who had really nothing about them except their grownupness.
And yet within our own solitude we were still
happy with things that lasted, and waited there
in an anteroom between our toys and the world,
held in a place prepared from the beginning
to stage events in pure and perfect sequence.

Who shows us a Child, as he is? Who puts the thought
in his brain, and gives that heap of differences
into his hand? Who makes the death of a child
out of gray bread, that hardens slowly; or leaves it
there in the rounded mouth, like the jutting core
of a beautiful apple? . . . Murderers are
easy to see through. But this is different: Death,
the whole of Death, softly to take it in
on the threshold of life itself, and not to be angry,
is indescribable.

H. H. Rex

In Defence of the Individual*

WE TALK these days a good deal about the conflict between East and West. The terms are geographical; since, however, they are employed to delineate not mere geographical, but ideological boundaries, they are misleading. New Zealand, for instance, is geographically in the East, but ideologically in the West. It is in Europe only that the geographical and the ideological boundaries more or less coincide. Still, the issue behind these terms is briefly that of collectivism and individualism.

Martin Buber once said, 'Individualism sees man only in relation to himself, but collectivism does not see *man* at all, it

* An inaugural lecture delivered at the Theological Hall, Knox College, Dunedin, March 1949.

sees only " society ".'* This is an over-simplification. Individualism, as I understand it, does not wish to deny the fact that man is a social animal. It assumes that society, with the co-operation which it permits, is absolutely essential if the individual is to be able to attain his full development. Neither refers the term ' individualism ' in the present context to the theory of *laissez-faire*. Notwithstanding the sullen adherence to this theory in certain quarters, the West is, on the whole, now convinced that the universe of individual claims and counter-claims balancing one another to the satisfaction of all was a disastrous misconception. The meaning which I wish to attach to the term ' individualism ' has no reference to any theory whatever. The term simply stresses the obvious fact that all existence is that of individuals, and it asserts that this fact has some bearing on our determination of the relation between individual and society. I believe that America, Britain, and France have this conviction in common in spite of the different emphasis it received in their history.

On the other hand, when I refer to ' collectivism,' I am, in the present context, not concerned with the collectivism of the primitive clan or tribe. Nor do I mean by collectivism primarily an economic system of production and distribution. I do not propose to treat the issue individualism versus collectivism on the economic, but on a more fundamental level. Collectivism, thus understood, does by no means (as Buber suggested) leave the individual out of account. But this is the difference. Individualism is primarily concerned with the empirical single person, collectivism has an ideal single person in view which is produced by a certain kind of society. For it, the empirical single person counts only in as much as he is able to assimilate this ideal, and to achieve this, the collectivist insists, the individual must be an integrated part of the collective.

I believe that the conflict between collectivism and individualism forms just another instance of what is one of the major themes of European civilization, that is, the conflict between Thought and Existence. Instead of defining these two terms, I would rather illustrate their meaning as follows. Man both lives in the world and thinks about it. In so far as he lives in it, he is ' the single one ' (Buber's '*Der Einzelne*'), both unique and concrete in his

* Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man,* p.200.

existence, and so are the beings that surround him. But once he turns the world of living beings into objects of thought, he begins to disregard their unique singularity and classes them according to universal concepts. In this process of abstraction the single individual object is bound to lose something of its individuality. The lion-tamer and the zoologist may look at the same lion; the former studies the habits of this particular individual animal: he is interested in its individuality; the zoologist takes the animal as a specimen of a class: he is interested in its universality, that is, in so far as it exhibits the common properties of its class. The one views the lion from the point of view of existence, the other from the point of view of thought. Both points of view are legitimate and necessary. Thought without existential reference is empty if not impossible; existential experience without thought is vague and confused. We naturally move from existence to thought and back to existence. That is, from living we turn to thinking about our life, and what clarity we have gained in our thought we put back into our life.

But here lies the source of the conflict which we observe in our European civilization. One can either let this movement from existence to thought and back to existence have its natural flow, or one can one-sidedly fix one's attention on the movement from thought to existence. In the one case thought is allotted the place of a servant who is to mark out for us the order of the world that surrounds us. In the other case, thought assumes a more masterful position; it impresses its own forms on the world. In the former case, the individual rests secure in his individuality; in the latter only so much remains of his individuality as fits into the classes under which thought subsumes it. And once thought has been given first place, the next step is complete confusion between thought and existence. Kant had maintained that the human mind impresses its own forms on the world and thus endows it with what order it possesses. To Kant, however, this creation of the mind was only the world of appearance; the real world, so he believed, was unknown to us. In Hegel's philosophy this dichotomy between the world of appearance and the world of reality was cast aside. Now the real world was claimed to be the mind's own creation—though this mind was no longer (as with Kant) that of the individual human being, but the world mind or 'the Absolute,' as Hegel liked to call it. In fact, however, it was

Hegel's own mind that began to dictate to existence and to cast it into a rigid intellectual framework, chiselling the individual's individuality into conformity with the general thought pattern. What was beyond chiselling was thrown overboard.

Of course, not all cases of thought getting the better of existence produce a collectivist view of life as in the Hegelian system. The cold gaze of reason may freeze the individual out of his environmental context in such a manner that the resulting abstraction has as little application to the concrete living individual as its collectivist counterpart. This is true, for instance, of Leibniz's view of the universe as a world of distinct individual spiritual entities. But in the present context we can leave this form of abstraction aside. The modern tyranny of thought over existence has its philosophical roots not in Leibniz, but in Hegel, for Hegel is through Marx the grandfather of modern collectivism.

This is odd, for Hegel considered himself the arch-enemy of abstraction. In his essay, 'Who is the Abstract Thinker?,' he poured scorn on the vicious habit of abstraction which sees, for instance, in a murderer nothing but the simple fact that he is a murderer, 'and by this single quality annihilates all the human nature that is in him.'* To avoid this annihilation of human nature in its concrete individuality, Hegel supplanted the 'abstract universal' by what he called the 'concrete universal.' What is implied in this distinction becomes clear when we consider, on the one hand, 'humanity' as 'rational animality,' repeating itself without variation in instance after instance, and, on the other hand, the history of mankind, the laborious rise from the Stone Age to the culture of Greece, the struggle of races with one another, the priests, prophets, poets, sages, barbarians, building and destroying civilization, procreating their kind and dying. In the one case we have the abstract universal 'man'; in the other, 'man' in the concrete.† It is obvious from this definition of the concrete universal that you arrive at its full meaning only through the study of history (the discipline which has the individual in his individuality as subject).

Now Hegel believed that history presents a rational process passing through phases not different from those of the human

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* Quoted by William Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, Prolegomena, p.305.
† Ralph M. Eaton, *General Logic*, p.270.

mind when engaged in thought. And he insisted that this belief would inevitably result from an empirical consideration of the facts of history. But as it was, abstract thought ran away with him. Instead of eliciting the rationality of the historical process from empirical data, he put his own abstracting reasoning into it. To quote Benedetto Croce, 'Before Hegel seeks the data of facts he knows what they must be; he knows them in anticipation as we know philosophic truths.' He had an abstract skeleton of history complete and all he needed was to clothe it with names and dates. And here, his selection was completely arbitrary. Only the facts that fitted into the celebrated pattern of 'thesis-antithesis-synthesis' were considered. The rest was dismissed as 'a superfluous mass, which, when faithfully collected, only oppresses and obscures the objects worthy of history.' The result was as vicious an abstraction as the one which Hegel had set out to supplant. In modern collectivism this Hegelian abstraction has taken the form of dialectical materialism, which is the theoretical basis of Marxian communism. Marx adopted Hegel's dialectical (logical) interpretation of history, interpreting the historical process, however, in purely economic terms. The individual was, consequently, reduced to the abstraction of 'economic man' (whose death Peter Drucker has announced, perhaps somewhat prematurely). And though Marx, in a manner, allowed that the individual was more than a mere member of a class, it is not the individual, as he really is in his individuality, that has a place in the Marxian scheme of things.

A difference of emphasis, either on thought or on existence, is then at the root of the present conflict between collectivism and individualism. Collectivism is under the spell of thought and sees accordingly in the individual primarily a member of a class (like the logician). He views him as a 'Jew,' a 'capitalist,' a 'worker,' etc. In contrast to this, individualism tries to bear in mind that existence is of individuals, and therefore views the individual primarily as 'John Smith,' 'Tom Jones,' etc. Collectivism is guilty of confusing thought and existence; individualism tries to keep thought subservient to existence.

This has serious implications as regards the treatment of the individual. In collectivism, with its tendency towards abstraction, John Smith and Tom Jones are no longer considered in terms of their own personal existence (in their individuality), but in terms of

the class to which they belong (in their universality). Once you think of the individual primarily as a member of a class, justice is meted out to him according to the esteem in which his class is held in the scale of values recognized by society. And a member of a class has little hope of mercy on account of his individual circumstances once his class stands condemned. This abstract approach to the individual is well illustrated by Heinrich Himmler's instructions to his S.S. generals at Posen in October, 1942, dealing with the extermination of the Jewish race.* On that occasion he warned his men not to bother him with the one exceptional decent Jew. All that counts is the elimination of a whole class. For, by definition, the class of Jews is not included in the class of decent beings. Once this is granted, there is no room for exceptions. This single example (it does not matter that it comes from a collectivism of a different shade, the essential features are the same) proves sufficiently that what Luther said to Zwingli, the individualist must say to the collectivist: 'Yours is a different spirit from ours.'

As we object to this purely abstract approach to the individual, we must now inquire into the grounds on which he can claim to be considered in his concrete individuality in relation to society. The traditional way to go about it is to assert that the individual has certain 'rights,' which in the course of history, have crystallized into the concepts of 'civil liberty,' 'personal liberty,' 'political liberty,' to which socialism would add 'economic liberty' as a fourth. The actual content of these liberties is by no means self-evident, nor do I wish to discuss this side of the question here. It need only be said that the meaning of these liberties has been and is still being worked out in an historical process which covers centuries. In our present discussion it is more relevant to clarify the basis on which these rights have been claimed for the individual.

We may distinguish between three main types of views. First, there is the view that according to the constitution of their nature or the will of God all individuals have certain definite rights which it is always wrong to violate. Then, we have the view that the state is based on a kind of contract and that therefore the individual retains those rights, and those only, which he

* R. W. Cooper, *The Nuremberg Trial*, p.114.

could not be conceived as contracting away. Finally, there is the utilitarian view that what rights an individual possesses depends solely on the general good. All these views have their peculiar difficulties. The second, the so-called contract theory, may be ruled out straightaway as a mere historical fiction. It assumes a natural state of equality and freedom at the threshold of history for which no evidence exists. 'Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains,' is a magnificent piece of rhetoric, but no more. The 'shades of the prison house' have always awaited the individual at the very moment of his birth—in the form of the family, the clan, the tribe, or the nation.

The first view is based on what is called 'the law of nature,' a concept of inestimable importance in the history of our civilization. In its most abstract definition, as given by Thomas Aquinas, the term expresses the belief that 'there is in man a certain natural law, namely his participation in the eternal law, by which he distinguishes good from bad.' And the eternal law, in turn, is 'the reason existing in the mind of God by which the whole universe is governed.'* Taken in this form, the definition tells us no more than that man is reasonable and that he is able to distinguish between good and evil. In fact, natural law is a purely formal concept. Consequently it is not unlike the proverbial Spanish Inn; that is, you get just as much out of it as you put into it. As a result theories based on natural law may carry us into such different directions as the extreme individualism of the American political system on the one side, and the authoritarian corporativism of Dr Salazar's Portugal on the other. At the root of the American Constitution is John Locke's definition of natural law; Dr Salazar, on the other hand, relies on the interpretation given to natural law in the papal Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (1931).† To John Locke natural law was essentially 'the natural right to private property.' This right, so he believed, each individual brings to society in his own person just as he brings the physical energy of his body. In accordance with this definition, the American Constitution is primarily (to quote Harold Laski) 'a clear effort to protect a certain view of property

* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* Prima Secundae, Quaest. xci., art. ii and art i.

† Ernest Barker, *Reflections on Government,* pp.359 sqq.

from invasion by the demands of the multitude.'* In contrast to John Locke, the papal Encyclical arrives on the basis of natural law at the concept of 'group liberty,' asserting the rights of the 'free family,' 'free township,' 'free vocational group,' rather than 'individual liberty.' It is not my intention to compare the merits of these two interpretations of natural law. All I wish to impress on you is the fact that reason in itself does not delineate any distinct rights which the individual may justly claim. The concept of private ownership is not more 'reasonable' than the principle of property held in common. The reason for this has been clearly stated by David Hume when he asserts that reason in itself dictates no way of acting. 'Reason is the guide of conduct only in the sense that it shows what means will reach a desired end or how a disagreeable result can be avoided.' The various formulations of natural law, then, give us no more than an insight into the moral convictions entertained by those who formulated them.

The Utilitarians dismissed the concept of natural law for the very reason that it was too vague to be of any practical use. But the utilitarian formulation of the rights of the individual had its own difficulties. Jeremy Bentham believed with Helvetius that all human beings want happiness and nothing but happiness. On this analysis of human nature he accepted the 'right to the pursuit of happiness' as axiomatic, that is, as wanting no further proof. And here one pursuit was to him as good as another. 'All other things being equal,' he said, 'push-pin is as good as poetry.' That is, quantity is all that matters. The legislator's sole concern must be to provide such conditions as ensure 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number possible.' Granting the premiss of Bentham's argument (which, I believe, is sound, provided we leave out the words 'and nothing but happiness'), we cannot accept the argument itself, for it is vitiated by a wrong kind of individualism which conceives of the individual as a purely quantitative atomic unit. As it is, however, individuals of very different tastes must live together, and since their pursuits of pleasure may seriously interfere with one another they must (like Schopenhauer's freezing porcupines) discover a mean distance at which they can most tolerably exist together without prickling one another too much.

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* Foreword to *The American Political System,* by D. W. Brogan (first edition).

J. S. Mill was acutely aware of this difficulty and tried to solve it by introducing his distinction between 'self-regarding' and 'other-regarding' actions. This distinction is, in fact, questionable, but even if its validity be granted, it demands a criterion by which to distinguish the two kinds of action. Mill's own answer was that we are at liberty to pursue our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Or, as he also put it, we must not make a nuisance of ourselves. But who determines what is a nuisance? I who like to spend my Saturday afternoons in my study, reading and thinking, or my neighbour who pursues his own good by gardening and listening at the same time to a blaring wireless that spits out the latest racing results? There is no question, this unsolicited information interferes most decidedly with my pursuit of my good. But does this justify me in interfering with the pursuit of his? Of course, I may suggest to him that he tune down his wireless somewhat. Still, he may reply that his self is fully developed only when he is permitted to garden and to listen to the racing news at the same time. It is obvious that this problem cannot be solved on a purely quantitative basis where one pleasure counts as much as another. We are inevitably led to introduce the question of quality. As a matter of fact, it was Mill himself who insisted that there are different qualities of pleasure and that we ought to cultivate the higher. And there was no doubt in his mind that only intellectual pursuits deserved the name of 'higher pleasures.' On strictly utilitarian grounds this is debatable. As it was, Mill had come under the spell of continental romanticism in the person of Wilhelm von Humboldt. It was to him that Mill referred when he pleaded for the individual's right to originality and eccentricity within a society of 'collective mediocrity.'

Historically, the romantic tradition represents one of the most passionate cults of the individual. This, however, did not include every and any individual, but only the exceptional—or to use the language of the time, the 'genius.' The essence of 'genius' was originality. Those whose work was distinguished by nothing more than 'right ideas, accurate expression, elegant style' were contemptuously relegated to the class of 'philistines'.* It is

* Lavater's definition of a philistine as quoted by R. Eucken in *The Problem Human Life*, p.433.

against these that Schumann's Davidsbuendler march in the well-known finale of his *Carnival*. And as regards the great bulk of ordinary men, they entered the romantic's purview only as an interesting object of aesthetic reflection. What the ladies of the Berlin salons suspected of Fichte, that he believed the whole world was nothing but the creation of his own mind, that the romantic claimed at least for his own person. He was convinced that he owed nothing to his environment. When Mill said, 'Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign,' he expressed a romantic conviction—though with the important modification that he extended this to the 'philistines' and the rest.

It was under the spell of romanticism that Kierkegaard, the most formidable critic of Hegelian collectivism, began his defence of the individual. And as he was an 'existential' thinker, keenly aware of the dangers of abstract thought, we must not expect of him any theory on which he bases the claims of the individual. This has the tremendous advantage that we keep close to the ground of existence. Those of Kierkegaard's writings which reflect the influence of the romantic movement are a reaction against certain trends in our civilization that have proved obstructive to the full development of the individual. The romantic cult of genius was a reaction against the cult of business and duty in an age of prudence. Against the businessman's creed that 'idleness is the root of all evil,' the romantic declared that idleness is 'the truly divine life' and 'the only true good.' Capacity for idleness (or, the intelligent use of one's leisure) is made the very criterion of man's humanity, for 'every human being who lacks a sense of idleness proves that his consciousness has not yet been elevated to the level of the humane.'* This thesis, rightly understood, reminds us that all 'rights' which the State can grant are in the end illusory as long as the individual, when face to face with himself, knows of nothing better to do than to yawn. After all, what is the use of the right of free speech when you have nothing to say: what is the good of the right of free thought when there is no thought in your head: and what good is the right to property when you do not know how to enjoy it? Boredom, not idleness, is the root of all evil. The romantic reacts also against a moral code which approves of such

* Kierkegaard, *Either/Or*, vol.I, p.237.

actions only as are done from a sense of duty towards somebody other than ourselves. This ban on our inherent desire of self-gratification does not make us nobler. It only persuades us to put a mask before our true face, and as the mask becomes more and more elaborate with the years, we are lost to ourselves in the end, mistaking the mask for the man. The romantic protests against a society which compels the individual to become the thief of a good that he has a perfect right to possess: his own self.

Still, the romantic argument has obvious shortcomings. For one thing, it is not all-inclusive. It considers only the exceptional individual. That is why Kierkegaard abandoned it in the end and renewed his defence of the individual on a different level, in the moral sphere. His choice of this sphere rested on the right assumption that individuals do not differ as widely in their capacity to distinguish between good and evil as they do in their intellectual and artistic equipment. Plato was mistaken when he coupled moral awareness with intelligence. Cicero was right when he claimed that all men are equally capable of discriminating between right and wrong. But Kierkegaard went further than that when he contended that, in fact, all moral responsibility rests ultimately on the shoulders of the individual. A group makes a moral choice only in a derivative sense, either through a leader or through the vote. Even decisions that involve millions of men and women, such as a declaration of war, rest ultimately on the individual's moral choice. Martin Buber somewhere quotes the sentence, 'Responsibility is the navel-string of creation.' That is, in the experience of moral choice the individual watches, so to speak, his own birth as individual. Notwithstanding the fact that Kierkegaard brushed aside the romantic's concern somewhat too emphatically, he was undoubtedly right when he insisted that the individual crystallizes into full individuality only by accepting his moral responsibility. For moral responsibility (to use a striking phrase of Kierkegaard's) 'closes immediately about the individual.'*

You may, however, object that Kierkegaard's view of the individual as the moral unit, though applicable to the nineteenth century, is no longer true of an age of increasing planning and socialization. This objection would merit serious consideration if socialism were the western counterpart of eastern collectivism.

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* Kierkegaard, *Unscientific Postscript*, p. 284.

But in spite of such superficial similarities as the nationalization of the means of production, there remains this fundamental difference that socialism (at least in its British forms) has not fallen under the spell of abstract thought, nor is there reason to fear that it will do so in the near future. Socialism includes 'economic freedom' in its 'plan' in order to set free an ever increasing number of individuals to pool their resources intelligently as fully responsible moral units; collectivism, on the other hand, wants the individual unit obediently to click into the uniform pattern. Socialism does not want to carve the concrete living individual into the likeness of some preconceived abstract man. In so far as it does any 'carving' this affects rather the wealth and the industrial power of the few in order that the economic liberty of the many may be the more safely established. For socialism proceeds on the obviously right assumption that political, civil, and personal liberties remain largely academic as long as the wealth of a nation is not justly distributed among its individual members. Of course, it would be foolish to deny the possibility that the 'plan,' through which the socialist tries to secure the individual the means for his full self-development, may turn one day into a 'pattern' according to which the individual is cast into relief. But, I think, we are justified in believing with A. C. Ewing that the individual is secure in a socialist society as long as 'the people as a whole want individual rights to be respected and governments are consequently aware that their tenure of office depends on respecting them.'* This impresses on us only the more emphatically the truth that moral responsibility rests ultimately on the individual.

Up to the present time, the defence of the individual took the form of establishing his 'rights' in a slow historical process. But once these rights are effectively established the individual is prone to become a danger to himself. That danger becomes acute when the majority of individuals by their selfishness reduce a nation to a host of individualists who keep one another at arm's length, bargaining hard over claims and counter-claims. An individualist society is doomed. It will fall a prey to collectivism either from within or from without. It is to this kind of 'atomic' individualism that Gerald Heard's verdict applies, 'An individualistic

* A. C. Ewing, *The Individual and Society*, p.82.

society is a contradiction in terms.' In other words, there comes a day when it is more important to stress the duties of the individual than his rights, in order to save from destruction that concrete individuality which his rights were meant to establish.

This is not the place to determine the logical relation of rights and duties (whether rights follow from duties, or duties from rights). Robert Grosseteste said that rights and duties are only two different sides of one and the same thing. This means at the very least that rights and duties go together. This correlation of rights and duties reminds us, then, that the individual can prosper in his individuality only in a mutual give and take of moral relations which bind all individuals together in the recognition that everyone has an equal right to pursue his happiness in his own way. On the surface, this seems to lead us back to the utilitarian position. But, in fact, this is not so. For utilitarianism bases the claims of the individual solely on an analysis of human nature which (as we saw) discovers in it nothing but the desire for happiness, as an end in itself. On the moral level (as Kierkegaard understands it) happiness can never be more than a by-product of our conduct. The end to which we relate this conduct depends on our intellectual beliefs and on our religious faith. Of course, belief and faith take very different forms within one and the same community, and one form or another is bound to predominate over the rest. And it is possible that the public standards of value run counter to the convictions of a greater or lesser number of individuals who happen to be in the minority. In that case, the individual, living in a democracy, can either try to alter the generally accepted standards of value by constitutional means, or exchange his present community for another by way of emigration.

The conclusion of our discussion is, then, (1) that the individual crystallizes into individuality most effectively in the moral sphere. He is the unit in the moral universe on whom ultimately all responsibility rests. (2) To fulfil this moral function, the individual must have freedom to exercise his moral responsibility. In other words, he must not be reduced to the position of a pawn or automaton pushed about by a leader or party. (3) What the individual's freedom actually consists in cannot be demonstrated by pure reasoning. It is only in the course of history that the content of this freedom will be worked out.

I. L. G. Sutherland

The Pacific Science Congress

THE Seventh Pacific Science Congress was probably the most important single intellectual event in the country's history. Approximately two hundred visiting scientists from fifteen different countries spent the best part of a month in New Zealand; a much larger number of New Zealand scientists participated actively in the Congress; some five hundred scientific papers were read and discussed before its nine divisions; the visitors, divided up according to their special interests, were taken on tours of both islands to examine their natural and some of their social features; there was nearly a month of solid talk and animated exchange of ideas and planning for the future. There has never been anything like it in this country before. The remark of one New Zealand scientist may be quoted to sum up the impression of the locals: 'It was the most interesting time I have ever spent in my own country.'

It was ten years since the Pacific Science Congress had met, more than double the usual time between meetings. In the interval the importance of the Pacific area had increased in the world picture: so had interest in its resources and in its peoples and their welfare. The movement for international co-operation and organization had grown in the post-war years, and Pacific countries and countries with interests in the Pacific were all prepared to take the Congress seriously, as the hand-picked character of the delegates showed. Altogether New Zealand was fortunate to be the host country for the Seventh Congress of the Pacific Science Association. The Royal Society of New Zealand was the sponsoring body and financial provision for the Congress was made by the New Zealand Government, every assistance in organizing and conducting it being given by the Departments of Scientific and Industrial Research and Internal Affairs. The constitution of the Pacific Science Association allows the host country the greatest freedom in drawing up the programme of the Congress and the New Zealand organizing committee arranged

for nine divisions: Geology and Geophysics; Meteorology; Oceanography; Zoology; Botany; Soil Resources, Forestry and Agriculture; Anthropology; Public Health and Nutrition; and Social Sciences. The Pacific Science Association is a regional body and does not aim at covering the whole field of scientific research; the basic sciences of physics and chemistry, for example, are not covered as such and problems discussed bear in the main on nature and man in the Pacific area. This was the first Congress at which a Social Sciences division was given a place in the programme and while the number of visiting specialists in these fields was not large—a single overseas economist, for example, showed up, from Melbourne—the divisional programme was in the end over-crowded, this being the experience of most divisions. Divisional programmes were arranged in the form of a series of symposia on key topics, with joint meetings of two or more divisions on large overlapping issues. The eighty page programme of the Congress represented an immense amount of work and planning over many months. That the Congress had achieved a high degree of success was made clear at its final plenary session, while letters subsequently received from overseas delegates seem to show more than polite thanks and appreciation. But it was not the listening to papers that was of most value to those attending the Congress, nor the discussions following the papers, significant though these often were. Much of the material presented in the papers would have appeared in scientific journals and could have been read by individual specialists. As at all such gatherings it was the face to face contacts that were of value, the conversation and the informal discussions at morning and afternoon tea, and after dinner in hotels, and at social functions and during tours. These were immensely stimulating and of inestimable value to those engaged in whole-time scientific research or to members of University staffs in their research and teaching. A casual remark by a top-ranking specialist can set a whole question straight or indicate a trend of research, and New Zealand scientists have all too few opportunities to hear such remarks. And the contacts made at the Congress can be maintained. The New Zealand Government will get its money back many times from the stimulus given to its scientific workers and, more directly, from advice given on particular problems, visiting specialists being called into conference by a number of government departments.

New Zealanders at large became fully aware of the Congress. Advance publicity was well organized and press coverage was good, especially during the Auckland sessions. Incidentally it was interesting to hear several overseas delegates, mostly Americans, publicly praising the New Zealand press for its general handling of the Congress and for the accuracy of its reports and interviews. The New Zealand Broadcasting Service gave much time on the air to the Congress during its sessions and built up a store of talks by visitors for subsequent broadcasting. The New Zealand Film Unit was also active. Evening public lectures were held during both the Auckland and Christchurch sessions, with distinguished visiting lecturers (not in every case most happily chosen) as the lecturers. Attendances were large, especially for Sir Peter Buck's delightful illustrated lecture, 'A Polynesian Atoll in Micronesia'; though on this occasion Sir Apirana Ngata almost 'stole the show' in moving the vote of thanks. For New Zealanders Sir Peter Buck was probably the outstanding personality of the Congress, since as well as his contributions to Congress discussions he had much to say in public about his impressions of his own people and their progress since he had last been amongst them. By various means New Zealanders were made aware of a significant international event taking place in their own country and, apart from matters relating to the Pacific region in general, were made aware of many informed comments on topics relating more specifically to New Zealand, the topics ranging from dental caries to soil erosion and from weather forecasting to fisheries.

But it was not the primary purpose of the Congress to educate citizens at large or to demonstrate short term results of immediate practical value. It was a stocktaking of the state of scientific knowledge in relation to Pacific countries, their physical features, their fauna and flora, their agriculture, their economic and power resources and the health and welfare of their peoples; and it was an occasion for the co-operative planning of future research, as well as for statements of the needed application of existing knowledge, this latter most notably in connection with the protection of nature and conservation in the Pacific area. In the long term, probably the most significant feature of the Seventh Pacific Science Congress was the time it devoted to the organization of future research and the comprehensive, over-all research plan which it produced. This activity of the Congress was thoroughly

organized. At its first meeting each division appointed a research plan committee which drew up a report on research needs in its particular field of interest. The plans were then submitted to the divisions for discussion, amendment and approval. They then went to an over-all research plan committee which after approving them submitted them to a final plenary session of the Congress. The recommendations for research thus represented the mind of the Congress as a whole. With the suggestions for their implementation they constitute a document of very great value. Emphasis in the report falls on co-operation; co-operation between countries and between existing scientific organizations and institutions interested in the Pacific area. Planning in science is a highly controversial issue; but this was not 'State-planned science,' but planning by representative scientists themselves in consultation, and after a review of existing knowledge and programmes had revealed research needs. If only partially put into effect, as will doubtless be the case, the results of this comprehensive programme can be very great, for this country as for other countries concerned. The research plan of the Congress may, for example, be expected to have an important influence on the activities of the recently established South Pacific Commission, which was well represented at the Congress. The South Pacific Commission had already adopted a list of research projects related to the economic and social welfare of the peoples of the non-self-governing territories of the South Pacific; and the recommendations of the Congress were related to these in ways that could indicate a desirable priority of treatment. The research plan has important bearings also on United States policy in regard to its recently acquired trust territories in the Pacific. The Congress heard, for example, a number of reports from American scientists who have participated in the recent survey of Micronesia and it discussed administrative needs and objectives in this area. Team research by groups of specialists was recommended in the total plan, with representatives of different nations participating, and Samoa was specially chosen for survey by a team of social scientists from New Zealand and the United States. Incidentally, the Congress gave many leads to New Zealand in respect of its policy in regard to the native peoples of its dependent territories.

Invitations to the Congress had been extended to a number of the specialized agencies of United Nations, and Unesco showed its

interest in the Congress by making a grant of twenty thousand dollars to enable scientists from countries especially affected by the war to attend, as well as by sending to the Congress one of its leading officials. The FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization) was also represented. The references to United Nations Agencies such as FAO, WHO (World Health Organization) and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) in the research plans of the various divisions of the Congress is significant indication of the growth of international organization in science and its applications.

Significant also was the Congress discussion, during the Christchurch session, of the social implications of science. A symposium on this many-sided subject had been held earlier by the Social Sciences Division as a preliminary to the discussion by the Congress as a whole. Four speakers opened up the issues arising from the relation of science to contemporary civilization and discussion ranged over such problems as—and they can merely be listed—science and the humanities as complementary expressions of the human spirit; the relation of science to warfare and its freedom under the present national system with its secrecy and security measures; should a halt be called to science; should social science research be speeded up to counter the misuse of physical science; the application of scientific method to politics and public administration; the value of science in education; the application of science and technology to the problem of raising standards of life in such countries as China and India; the synthesis of science and practice as illustrated by agriculture; and finally the problem of how to feed a rapidly growing world population. It was an extraordinarily interesting discussion and members of the Congress had shown that they possessed not only the desire to know, which is the true spirit of science, but also, since scientists are people, the desire to see knowledge applied to human betterment.

25 x 31 ins

Tahunanui 1947

PAINTINGS BY DORIS LUSK

$23\frac{1}{2}$ x 20 ins

Riwaka 1941

22 x 18 ins

Ruby Bay

In the possession of the Southland University Association

Akaroa Ha[illegible] 1940

Brian Thompson

Letters from Samoa

2nd December

MY DEAR CHARLES,

The sea here makes a different sound, a watery duet: at one's feet laps the mild obbligato, the lagoon's gentle wave, child of great Mother Ocean, that beats ceaselessly on the reef a mile out with a deep bass roar, curiously remote. This aqueous lullaby blends with sun and sky and verdure in a tropical trance, womb-like, a subtle stimulation of ears and nose, and hot coral on the sole of the foot. Otherwise the scene is familiar, verifying the picture postcard, the Gauguin, or the Sitzpatrick travelogue, according to one's artistic experience. Coconut palms and beach and all—*I have been here before:* in dreams perhaps, as Dunne suggests, like the two psychic ladies in the gardens of Versailles.

We are here to work, as you know: three inquisitive Otago men and a woman, to study the insides of the native Samoan. His outsides would satisfy most people. He is a big brawny fellow, light brown like the Maori but finer featured and less adipose. A crowded street in Apia is something to see. The street itself is poor enough, unpaved, its shops and stores flung down haphazard, each built simply for its purpose, without concession to aesthetics; a little trading post of the last century, where the massive modern taxis are as anachronistic as they are dangerous and one turns to the horizon for the square rigging of a windjammer rather than the *Matua's* discreet bows.

The teeming street is bright with Manchester cottons, worn tucked round the waist, bath-towel fashion. Women wear it somewhat higher, to cover exquisite bosoms. This single rag, the *lava-lava,* seems to be standard right across Oceania, as the *sarong* in Malaya, the *sulu* in Fiji—except in the Cook Islands, where shirts and trousers and dresses, inappropriate and uneconomical, are sadly *de rigueur.* In the Samoan climate one could comfortably go naked but Samoans are both sexually modest and aware of the virtues of adornment. The *lava-lava* doesn't encourage hurried movement. It tends to slip off, even with the expert;

but is always caught just in time. Chiefs and policemen and other dignified persons prefer a belt as reinforcement. It is still the garment of all classes and all occasions, for playing cricket or swimming or in bed. Even the professional classes eschew clothing with divided legs. Samoan medical practitioners (S.M.P.) wear a white tailored *lava-lava* with side pockets and a zip fastener.

The crowd in the street is vivid and noisy. It contains few old people, most seem to be children or adolescents, an invigorating spectacle to eyes accustomed to Europe's weary, ageing populations or the birth-controlled, conscientiously conserved New Zealand scene. Samoa has doubled her population within the last generation. More than half of those now living are below the age of fifteen. This I dare say is hardly to be matched anywhere else in the world. A population snowball has started to roll, when these children begin to reproduce the rate of increase must be phenomenal. Even so, saturation point is a long way off. They say the island could support a million at least, they are not yet eighty thousand.

Two hundred whites sit on the edge of the island, alien and ill at ease. I don't yet know what the Samoans think about the *palagi* (rhymes with Rangi), but the *palagi's* opinion of his brown brother has been expressed to us freely and so far with unanimity. The Samoan is lazy, dirty, untruthful, treacherous, sadistic and over-sexed. Well, I don't know. It's possible.

10th December

We are gradually getting down to work, having been held up by bad weather. When I say it has rained for a week, I mean that for seven days the heavens have been open, emptying upon us a steady, unbelievable torrent, almost without pause. The occasional breaks are awful, the cool of the downpour succeeded by stagnant steam from the hot, sodden earth. Unable to bear it indoors, one slips out to catch what movement of air there may be at the water's edge. Caught twenty yards from home by the next deluge, totally unheralded, one is soused between there and the doorstep. If only we wore the *lava-lava* instead of paying for laundry! The November rainfall was 27 inches above the *monthly* average.

So we spend our time in the Hospital, up the hill from Apia and below Vailima, Stevenson's old home, now the High Commissioner's residence. (But the ghost of Stivi still walks, tapping and scratching behind walls, a reverently authenticated poltergeist.)

The Hospital is well equipped. Patients are sent in by S.M.P.'s who are posted throughout the islands, not before they have done the best they can at their out-stations. As they do not reach an S.M.P. until 'Samoan treatment' has failed—partly a medicinal routine and partly a brutal combination of massage and osteopathy, which many never survive—their condition when admitted is usually desperate. Yet excellent work is done and results are remarkably good, especially in the radical field of surgery. This has led to a steady decrease in the deeply rooted distrust of *palagi* methods and most Samoans are willing to come into hospital, once convinced that they are ill enough. As soon as they cease to feel ill, they go out again at the earliest opportunity, so that relapse rates are high and discouraging to the staff.

Those who elect to do so are nursed in native *fales*, their beds surrounded by the mats of those relatives who accompany them to provide their food, in the Japanese fashion. One has to push one's way through the crowd to the bedside, and examine the patient with interested faces peering over one's shoulders, to a running commentary which sounds uncomplimentary, and probably is. Patients of either sex are reluctant to expose themselves for examination. Queen Victoria is said to have been delivered of each of her nine (was it?) offspring under cover of the bedclothes but the half-naked Samoan is equally jealous of his private parts, yielding inch by inch to the palpating hand. R—, the Chief M.O., says that you can always tell if a patient is dead by attempting to lift his *lava-lava*. If he has a spark of life, he won't let you.

Yet the atmosphere is serene, the tempo *andante*. Under the control of white ward sisters, the Samoan nurses stroll around in white caps and aprons, over cherry-coloured frocks, but with bare brown feet and legs, very pretty. Chattering they splash through the rain between buildings, each with a black cotton umbrella that becomes parasol when the sun shines. Puddles they traverse unshod, no shoes to ruin, but their tough hides are

not proof against the lurking ancylostoma, the hookworm, the worm that dieth not.

Samoan nurses, male orderlies and other staff are of considerable education and must speak English while on duty. There is strong competition for these jobs, which carry a lot of prestige, the only thing Samoans will compete for. Money in terms of purchasing power means little to the individual, who in any case is obliged to turn over the whole of his earnings into the family kitty. It is true that he who contributes heavily gains proportionately in local esteem, but the most generous provider may still lose precedence to another whose general behaviour is more acceptable, or with superior family connections. So earning capacity carries no certainty of reward, even in Samoan terms, and the incentive of wages is so vitiated that there is chronic labour shortage in all commercial enterprises.

Among the hospital patients, most common pathological conditions are represented, aside from those peculiar to the tropics. Psychiatric disorders are exceedingly rare. This striking difference from civilized life is given by Margaret Mead as the inspiration of her celebrated study of Samoan adolescence. One case did occur here recently, in a young Samoan of exceptional talent and initiative. Earning good wages, he left his village to live in Apia, adopting European standards. One day, when his savings account had reached considerable proportions, the head of his family came in to announce that a ceremonial occasion in the village demanded the whole of the young man's capital for communal consumption. To refuse would mean a complete break with Samoan custom, to accept would mean a heart-breaking start again from scratch, leading sooner or later to repetition of this social blackmail. He refused; but the enormity of the choice was too much for his mental stability and he broke down. He became restored to health only when, on medical advice, he recanted, turned his back on the town and resumed his place at home, a welcome prodigal.

The part-white population, numbering about five thousand, is peculiarly subject to this sort of stress. Unless themselves the children of half-castes, they are usually brought up in Samoan fashion. Many become clerks or shop assistants and some have attained wealth, social prominence and some influence in politics. Yet few abandon Samoan ways completely. The family and the

village are never far away. While there is no colour bar in the Western sense and legally the smallest drop of non-Island blood —even Chinese—confers the right to be called 'European,' their acceptance by the white community is never complete. The part-white therefore, with a foot in both camps and a standing in neither, tends either to retreat from competitive *palagi* life and go 'back to the mat' as they say, or to count himself a Samoan from the start.

15th December

The subject for our first field study is a boys' secondary school above Vailima. These youths come from all over the islands, chosen by competitive examination. They live native fashion, in open-sided *fales*, and grow most of their own food. Fine fellows they appear, fearless and gay in the uniform green *lava-lava*, occasionally with a hibiscus behind the ear, a habit oddly devoid of effeminacy.

They troop past us in single file, each bearing specimens of what I will not specify but which will later go under the microscope. Each boy is weighed and measured, is physically examined by one of us, skin-tested by another and relieved by a third of a good measure of blood. Subsequent laboratory work will give us a very full medical picture.

It is already apparent that their splendid physique is marred by a variety of skin diseases. Most of these fine tawny pelts don't bear close inspection. Any area free from yaws or scabies or impetigo is liable to be lacerated or burned deliberately as proof of stoicism, a popular adolescent foolishness. One boy couldn't provide even the one square inch of healthy forearm required for a test injection, and had to be excluded.

The New Zealand teachers maintain perfect, almost military, discipline. Threat of expulsion is enough to cow the most unruly, so highly do they hold the privilege of being in the school. The teachers show more sympathy and a higher regard for Samoans than *palagi* we have met so far. They do not agree that their pupils are unteachable, naturally vicious and of low intelligence. The fact that they find their work pleasant and rewarding seems to prove this point, more impressively, for instance, than the high-pressure intelligence tests which have been adduced to

prove the contrary, but which I cannot be satisfied are applicable to uncivilized peoples. Their book-learning of course starts later and continues only intermittently. They learn English as we learn French. How would an English child get on whose teaching was all in French, with almost no English books even to help him to the new essential tongue?

Moral instruction isn't much easier, as European ethics cut right across Samoan custom, for all its overlay of Christianity. As traditional communists, they can't be expected to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*. In sex matters an easy promiscuity, mildly frowned upon by the Church, is generally indulged in the young. Any natural consequences are without any stigma of illegitimacy—all babies are welcome in the Samoan family circle, even the nine hundred *malini* left by the U.S. marines in memory of their brief garrison duty; but consequences from boy-and-girl liaisons are apparently few. Perhaps as Gorer has noted in the promiscuous adolescents of other primitive peoples, nature has obligingly decreed an infertile period to these halcyon years. Love and marriage, in fact all personal relationships in Samoa, have little of the emotional strength that we are apt to take for granted. R— says that the devotion between mates measures exactly six inches, but this may be over-simplification.

Certainly they appreciate little beyond the simplest psychological processes, though I wouldn't care to describe them in this respect as 'children' in the easy paternal missionary style. They are keen devotees of the cinema, why I don't know, not only the scene but the thematic range of Hollywood, naive enough in all conscience, must to them be utterly incomprehensible. They seem to find the movies highly amusing by their own standards. Last night *Mr Skeffington* was screened, rather a good film and well done. You may remember the climax, when Claude Rains and Bette Davis meet after years of estrangement, she raddled with age, he blind and broken from the concentration camp. Sightlessly he gropes towards her voice, trips over a stool and falls headlong at her feet. While *palagis* dissolved in tears, Samoan mirth rocked the roof.

(*To be continued*)

Osman E. Middleton

My Thanksgiving

IT IS FALL in Up-state New York when I am herded in through the weighty steel gate of the City Jail.

The big Immigration Officer nods happily to the guards as we slide between two safety doors and stop at the grill of the reception desk.

'Name, address, occupation? Turn out your pockets! Move! What's that you're hiding?'

Wearily I unpin the little green star of my Esperanto badge. My stomach is like my pockets and I want to end this comedy and get something to eat. My late watchdog from Immigration clops off down the corridors back to the outer world. A warder built like a heavy-weight wrestler right up to the ears leads me to the washroom. I feel the rolled-up dollar bill press comfortingly against the sole of my foot as I strip for the compulsory shower.

When I come out of the water I see a tray of food lying near my shoes and a cotton jail shirt and pair of pants. I gulp the string beans and dry bread. An elevator takes me up two floors and another big guy looks at me as if I am a real live moa-bird.

'Well, well, all the way from Noo Zealand, huh!'

Strong steel doors clang and clang and I know now I am really on the inside. I am in a narrow range about seventy feet long. Opening onto it are fourteen steel boxes each fitted with toilet washbasin and a steel shelf with a sponge-rubber mattress.

Most of the prisoners are playing cards at the little steel tables on the range when I come in. I squint in the bad light and see that several of them are negroes. They all look at me as though I am the original man from Mars or the missing-link or something. I guess I must look strange. My hair sticks up in thick red tufts. It has not been cut since we left England weeks ago. I know my face must show the strain of the long hitch-hike.

For the first time since I had my last look at Rangitoto from the stern of the old freighter, I feel lonely and forgotten. They have not even let me keep my little green star. I wonder if any of

them has heard of an international language other than the dollar.

A thin-faced youth, with eyes which look everywhere but at my face, sits down facing me across the little table that is welded to the bars. He offers me a cigarette in a flat husky voice. His voice fascinates me. He would be the ideal trigger-man in a gangster film. Perhaps he has even acted the part in real life.

It takes me a while to realize that none of these men are actors. Life is real for them and the present, with its mass of steel and concrete between them and the outside, is reality itself. And yet, as I begin to know them by their nicknames: as I listen to the sparkling stories of the con-man or the coarser ones of the pimp and petty thief, I know that they are all acting. From the coloured boy who sings in a soft tenor after lock-up time to the hijacker who cheats at solitaire—all are playing parts.

And I? Yes, even I must take the part that has been thrust upon me. Perhaps I would have been happier as the onlooker, the perennial bystander. Yet, many of these boys are happier living their lives than I have been in the safe life I lived at home. Some of them will be comfortably housed in Federal Pens while I am shut away from the sunlight waiting for my case to be heard.

For the first few weeks most of my thoughts turn on how to get enough of the cornmush, sourkrout and dry bread that is pushed through the bars to us three times a day. I vow that if I ever do make the free world I will never visit a Zoo; never keep a bird in a cage.

One day, two of the coloured boys start fighting and are dragged away to do solitary in the hole.

I bless the ingenuity of the prisoner of long ago who is supposed to have invented playing-cards. The con-man teaches me to play Blackjack and Casino. The sexo shows me gin-rummy. The boys stop kidding me about my Limey accent and call me Kiwi.

At last comes a day everyone has been talking about.

THANKSGIVING.

I begin to think of the outside world. Have I worked my way over twenty-five thousand miles of salt water, hoboed through fifteen of these United States only to be jailed like a common criminal?

Thanksgiving. Yes, we used to read about it in the American magazines far away across the Pacific. Then in the War the G.I.'s used to tell us about it. And here it is.

Outside, in the free world the snow is falling. I know it is because the guard who just came on duty tells me it is. Just think, if he had some hair I might see some snowflakes still sticking in it. I have never seen snow in America before. In fact, three months ago I had not seen America. But now, here I am in one of the toughest jails in the country. Why do they pick on me, a poor dope of a student who thought he could save his sight if he got to New York.

And you can't get out of this place. The old guys say so. 'This is a tough can,' they say. And the stir-crazy guys look at you in a funny way. They don't want to get out.

The boys are crowding against the bars at the top end of the range. If you stand up there you can hear the chow wagon coming. Yes, it has rubber wheels but there are other sounds that tell you. You hear the clash of the pannikins as it leaves the elevator and your stomach contracts if you're not long in from the outside and the saliva gathers in your mouth.

'Here it comes boys!'

'Some of you get the turkey, I'll look after the dessert!'

'Here's the man with the oranges, man!'

And then the sheriff comes in and tells us to line up for cigars or cigarettes. They even give us sugar in our coffee today and there is candy from the Welfare and a new deck of playing cards.

This is the highspot of my American visit.

I forget the months at sea. The damp cell with the number nine painted outside. I forget the nights I have rolled from one side to the other of my little steel shelf with my eyes stinging from the lights that never go out.

I sink my teeth into the firm, brown drumstick until they find the bone underneath.

My orange lies hoarded and precious on my bed roll where I can gloat over it and guard it.

I crunch into the celery. Yes! Even a stick of celery today. It is pale yellow. It is not green like the grass which is lying out under the snow in the free world but it has that tangy feeling in

your mouth which only growing plants not long torn from the earth can give.

Yes, I forget I am number nine in a jailhouse now. Once again I am the hopeful dope of a student setting out on a crazy journey because my eyes are diseased. But they would not give me a visa, and when they caught up with me I had no papers.

But it doesn't matter now. I don't even care about being deported any more.

I have eaten a Thanksgiving dinner and I know, just as surely as I tasted clean sweet air in that stick of celery, that one day I will come back across the sea and eat another—on the right side of the bars.

Bruce Mason

Summer's End

(*continued*)

VI

JOHN woke when it was still dark and listened to the heavy patter on the roof without knowing for a moment what it was. A white shape hurried in, shut the window, and vanished. Mother. Rain! The glorious knowledge leapt out at him and seemed suspended, almost tangible, just above his head. The race was off, the race was off. A delicious peace entered his body. Firpo won't be running today, Firpo . . . won't . . . be . . . running . . . He was asleep.

His mother called him at eight o'clock. The window was still streaming with water, and he spent the morning, happy. The race would be postponed: that was certain, and the tide wouldn't be right again for another fortnight, and in that time, Firpo could build himself up. Money, though? Well, he still had the ten shilling note that Grandma had given him; it was in the Post Office.

As the morning advanced, the rain grew lighter and he could no longer hear it on the iron roof. At twelve it had stopped altogether and while they were having lunch, a treacherous gleam appeared above Rangitoto. When lunch was over, the garden was sweating in the steamy heat that comes after heavy rain.

'But it's still a horrible day,' he told himself, and resolutely went to his room to read. 'There'll be no one on the beach; it's a nasty, nasty day, I tell you.' He addressed himself with fierce emphasis. Look at it will you? He looked. Grey, sand grey all over—oh. The clouds had parted to reveal a nasty little patch of blue which grew as he watched. And a moment later, there was the sun, plonk in the middle of it, shining away as hard as it could. A quarter to two, he could bear his book no longer. He went on to the porch and looked out along the beach. A large clot of people had gathered along by the rocks and he could see several young men in shorts and singlets, bouncing up and down.

He rushed down on to the beach. The soft sand near the gate, soaked by the rain, crumbled under his feet. He raced down to the flat, hard stretch. Yes, he admitted sorrowfully, it was just the day for the race. Just the very day. The beach was as firm as it could be, and his bare feet left no mark.

Before he reached the chattering group by the rocks, he saw that Firpo was not there. His heart gave a sudden bound—Firpo was not coming, he had forgotten, he had fallen down and broken his leg, Firpo was dead. There he stood by the grave, the solitary mourner watching the simple coffin sink slowly into a pauper's grave. Earth to earth, ashes to . . . The rocks. And here was Mr Castle, the starter, holding a sawn-off pistol which he was throwing up and catching in an irritable kind of way, and there were the contestants, six of them, hopping about, spreading their arms and throwing them about their bodies, turning their trunks in jerks from one side to the other. John mingled with the people and seemed at once to be part of their talk.

'Is he really any good?'

'Olympic Games, he's hopeful.'

'Firpo he calls himself.'

'Who does he think he is, anyway?'

'Half a mile, isn't it?'

'Give you a bob on young Ferguson here.'

The talking died suddenly to a low, tense buzz. Round the rocks came Firpo, dressed as always in his filthy bathing top, drill pants, and tattered canvas shoes. Round his shoulders hung an old, vari-coloured tweed coat. He took in the group with a single quick glance, then raised his hand in greeting. No one answered him, but Mr Castle called out: 'Come on Samson, or whatever your name is. We're all waiting for you.' Firpo did not hurry his dignified, measured gait. He arrived, shook hands with each of the contestants gravely, and began a sort of hopping dance. Every now and then one leg would flash up unaccountably, and he would touch it casually with his index finger. A final whirl of his arms, and he was ready.

He removed his coat and pants to reveal the lower half of his bathing suit. The crowd had been respectful up to now—Firpo's self-possession had carried some authority. But the sight of those wicker-basket arms and legs beside the muscled calves and biceps of his opponents was too much. A titter arose; some tried to hide it, but most did not even try, just laughed outright. 'This is going to be good,' said one. The athletes moved away from Firpo with significant smiles, establishing a communion against this scarecrow which had not existed before, each reflecting, 'Well, I can't be last now.' The crowd had suddenly become an entity in its laughter and had begun to barrack. 'Come on Ted: we're watching you, boy.' 'Give it to 'em, Joe; you've got nothing to lose.' Oh, hasn't he, thought John tensely. Hasn't he just.

'Come on, Firpo!' he shouted, and then as the crowd focussed on him grew red and ashamed, and wished the sand would cover him up. 'That kid's his pet,' said someone beside John, and turned away, contemptuously. 'I am not!' shouted John, sensing the insult, but not what it meant. 'Don't you dare—'

'All right, boys, you can get ready,' and with this, John and all of them forgot everything else, and became instantly a single eye, brain, and ear, watching and listening. Mr Castle passed among them, giving his instructions. 'Not to break. Wait for the gun. You can't go wrong if you wait for the gun. Just run to the first cable, the judges are there now.' Somebody waved a white handkerchief: far along the beach, another fluttered. 'O.K.?' He raised his gun, and the seven men crouched down on their line of pipi shells. Firpo was in the middle, three on each side of him. He looked like an old hawk squatting there, John

thought. But at least he knew how to get down, had even made little holes for his feet. 'Get set!' Seven behinds moved slowly upwards. Mr Castle's finger locked over the trigger. The crowd all seemed to take the same breath, and then let it out with a gasp. One of the athletes had fallen forward and ran a few paces. Mr Castle brought the gun down again. 'Can't you boys get it?' he asked in an aggrieved tone. 'It's not all that difficult, is it?' All the others got up and danced around a moment, legs and arms flopping loosely like rag dolls, but Firpo did not move. He stayed kneeling in the sand, crouching there, completely absorbed, waiting.

It was impressive. John could feel the slight uneasiness in the crowd who felt they might be cheated of their comedy. 'I wonder if he's any good?' asked someone, voicing a general suspicion which had not so far occurred to anyone.

Down they went again. On your marks. Get set. John, his eyes on the back of Firpo's head, thought the bang would never come. When it did, he hardly heard it. Because Firpo had left the mark as if propelled by a vast boot; he bounded into the air, already he was ahead. John felt a shiver run right down his spine. Was this real? Was it he, John, watching this? Firpo was moving in great, loping bounds; he seemed to touch the sand with regret and sprang off again, all legs; his arms hardly moved. Behind him came the six young men in a pack, arms and legs pumping frantically, like puppies following a horse. The crowd was silent. 'By Christ, he can run though, can't he?' muttered someone at last. 'And not such a young joker, either.' John found his voice. No fear of rebuff now.

'Firpo!' he yelled. 'Come on, Firpo! Oh, you beauty!'

They were about seventy five yards off. John, wild with joy, was rubbing his hands up and down his pants. Then he watched intently. Firpo was still ahead, but—and as if to answer the doubt in his mind, a voice behind him said: 'He'll never keep up this pace. They're gaining on him already.' John stared hard at the receding figures. Firpo and the pack had become one jiggling clot, from which every now and then Firpo's head would jerk up as if he were drowning and coming up to breathe. And now, with the quiet despair that follows unreasonable joy, John saw the pack divide round Firpo and leave him exposed, like a rock before the receding tide. Firpo made one desperate wild lunge into the air

after them, spread his arms wide, and falling heavily like a gawky albatross, lay on the sand, still.

The crowd, which had been till now uneasy and diffuse, was at once united in laughter. It was a comedy after all—they had been right all the time—the funny scene had just come later than usual—well, all the better. God, what a nut! Olympic Games! Ought to be locked up, not safe: the remarks swam on the trough of their laughing, noisy, hard, yet not wholly unkind, since through it they felt in some way appeased. Firpo had done his stuff, they had had their money's worth. And will you look at young Joe Dyer there! Come on Joe! Give it to 'em, boy! You've got 'em all licked! . . . Already, Firpo was out of their thoughts. Now they could enjoy the race.

But of all this, John was ignorant, the laughter he hardly heard. After the first, chilling shock, he had grabbed Firpo's coat and pants, and started to run. Firpo lay flat, right in front of the Crome's front gate. Three people moved towards him uncertainly, and were repelled when Firpo abruptly arched his back, hung his head forward and vomited painfully into the sand. He remained there, crouching. As John reached him, the thin back arched again, and Firpo was shaken by a long fit of dry retching. He knelt there, groaning, shaking his head slowly back and forth, and saw John. He looked at him with clear eyes, sad and full of comprehension.

'Well, boy?' he said. John turned away, unable to speak, afraid he might cry. Firpo was asking him to judge, him, just a kid, to tell him what a beaut he was. I'll take my medicine: let's have it. It was all in that 'well.' He couldn't do it, and Firpo lowered his head.

'I'm done, boy,' he said, 'done,' and was sick again. The stench was awful, and John stared over the jerking head out to sea, trying to still the sympathetic pressures in his throat and stomach which urged him to be sick too. Firpo shuddered impotently once or twice, then held out his hand to John.

'Would you help me up, boy?' John draped the coat around the thin shoulders and slowly raised Firpo to his feet. His face was sand-grey, and the rim of dark hair on his cheeks looked stuck on, like the fur on a mussel shell. Firpo staggered a few steps, stopped, and gave a long wheezy cough.

'John! Hey, John!'

John turned, and there was Ted, staring fascinated at the little mounds of vomit.

'What do you want?'

'Daddy says you're to come home at once.'

John felt his stomach muscles tighten, and a spasm of fear chilled him.

'Tell him I'm busy,' he said.

Ted was dogged, obeying orders. 'You've got to come. That's what he said. You've got to.'

'I can't. I'll be back soon.'

'You'll get a hiding,' said Ted, leaving his best gun for the last salvo.

Firpo straightened up. 'I'm all right, son,' he said. 'Off you go.'

'I'm going to take you home,' said John, suddenly sure of himself, 'that's what I'm going to do. And that's what you can tell Dad.'

'You'll get a hiding,' said Ted uncertainly, a little awed by the drama of it all.

'Go on, boy,' said Firpo with a weary emphasis, 'Go on!'

'No!' shouted John. 'You need help.' He was louder than he really felt, but having a grown man utterly dependent on him —it was something new to him, exciting. He gave his orders.

'Ted, you can go home and give Dad my message. Come on, Firpo.'

Ted left, muttering about hidings. 'You'll get it!' he flung over his shoulder. John ignored it, and turned to Firpo, who had begun shuffling along the beach. 'Here,' he said. 'Put on your pants.' Firpo clambered into them awkwardly, leaning on John as he did so. John felt a sudden sharp warmth, intense, shocking. He had never been so happy in his life.

They proceeded slowly along the beach, and Firpo seemed to revive a little. There was a shout from somewhere behind, and John heard his name. He looked back, and there was his father at the gate, beckoning him home with fierce waves of his arm that turned his body half round with each furious jerk. John went on walking with something struggling to form itself in his mind, an image of the awful interview which lay ahead, of the hiding. But some new power inside him kept it out.

The race was over, and the crowd had straggled. Some passed Firpo and John on their way home. Joe Dyer had won, it appeared, and a few moments later the runners themselves came trotting back for their coats. They passed Firpo, and shrugged knowingly at each other. Then one of them suddenly shouted, 'Hard luck!' and Firpo bent his head. People met them, sniggering, silent until they passed, then turning to stare after them, some of them tapping their foreheads, until at last they were at the rocks, alone.

Slowly, they climbed to the bach, Firpo stopping several times to draw gasping breaths. John opened the door and led Firpo to his stretcher, pulling the clothes about to some semblance of comfort. Firpo sat down and with the laboured deliberation of an old man, took off his shoes.

'Lie down, Firpo,' said John. 'You'll feel better then.'

Firpo looked at him a moment, then threw himself face down on the bed, shoulders hunched, heaving. For a moment, John thought he would be sick again, but then a thick muffled sound told him that Firpo was crying. He had never seen a man cry before: he was embarrassed and distressed. He fell on his knees beside the bed. 'Firpo, don't, don't!' He timidly touched the shaking back. 'You'll do it next time. It's because you didn't build your body up. You just weren't fit, that's all. Listen,' and he told him the story of the meat. Firpo turned his head. His face was streaked where the tears had run over the dirty flesh, and there were bright beads on some of the bristles. He snivelled, long and liquidly. 'You're a good lad, John. A good lad. But if you think there's anything in me, you're wrong, quite wrong. I'm finished. Done. Just done.'

Earnestly, John tried to tell him no. But after a while he couldn't go on. Some stricture in his mind blocked his throat and wouldn't let him speak. He opened his mouth. 'Yes, you will,' he said feebly, without conviction. Firpo gave the briefest glimmer of a smile, and sank back. In a dead voice, he told John to go.

'Isn't there anything I can get you?'

Firpo said no, but John insisted on looking for something. He found only a stale loaf, some faintly rancid butter, and sugary jam. He cut two thick slices, and Firpo ate them slowly, crumbs powdering his face and the blankets. When he had finished, John left.

As he arrived at the house, Ted came down the path to meet him.

'Gosh, Dad's hangava crabby with you!' he said admiringly. John entered the house where his mother was reading a book. She looked at him steadily. 'You've been a very naughty boy,' she said with finality and shut her book with a snap. It acted as a signal. James Crome arrived on the porch heavy-heeled, instinct with flouted authority.

'So here he is,' he said, then fiercely: 'What do you mean, disobeying me like that? I was the laughing stock of the beach! What do you mean by it?'

'I'm sorry,' said John.

'He's sorry!' James Crome tossed the remark to a vast audience. Ted, who had been hovering about, came in and sat down, head on bunched fists, listening with an avid, bird-like attention. John found that he did not mind. His mother was reminded of the earlier occasion when she had dismissed Ted to spare John, and she gazed at him now, wondering.

'He was sick. I had to help him,' John said.

'Why? Why did you have to? A dirty, stinking loony! What do you see in him?'

John had no answer to this that he could put into words, and he stayed silent.

'Well? Do you like him?'

John thought a moment. Like him? Was that what he felt?

'Yes, I do,' he replied.

His father smote his forehead. 'Well, it beats me. It just beats me. A son of mine bosom pals with a certified lunatic! Lovely, isn't it?'

May Crome spoke. 'That's not the point, Jim. It's not our affair if he likes him. But you promised us you wouldn't go near the bach again. I'm not talking of today. That's different. Now, John. Tell the truth. Have you been to Mrs Atkinson's since we told you not to?'

John admitted that he had.

'All right, then,' said James Crome. 'That's point number one settled. It's the slipper for you, my lad. What else have you been doing?'

Slowly, but without difficulty, John told them how he had tried to build Firpo up for the race so that one day he would be

a made man. The words came without effort; the ideas he used to find so difficult formed and came out with a will of their own. As he spoke, a new person seemed to be standing by him, and he had the strangest feeling that he was not speaking at all—it was this other new one. He felt no fear, and he saw his parents' faces smoothing out as he talked.

His father sat down a moment, then jumped up again. 'But boy, boy, boy! The man's an impostor! Can't run to save himself!'

'What's an impostor?' queried John politely.

'He's been having you on, this rooster.' James Crome moved quickly over to his son, and spoke earnestly. 'Look, John. Everywhere you go, people are watching to see if you're soft. Oh, they may sound all right, but they're going to take you down boy, soon as look at you. They'll fleece you like that,' and two of his fingers clicked. 'You musn't listen to them . . . And here you go spending all your pocket money on one of them, the first that comes along. Son, you'll just have to learn . . . Oh, well. I don't know.' He sat down with a thump. 'But if you think you're getting that five shillings back my boy—'

'He's still got the ten shillings Grandma gave him,' said Ted. May Crome suddenly laughed. She rarely felt assurance, and usually it left her as quickly as it had come. This she did not even know she had felt. It was there, and she laughed.

'Come here, John,' she said, and kissed him. 'I like my boys to help other people.'

James Crome rose, aggrieved. 'Now look here, May. That's no good at all. If I'm going to have some authority round here, I'd like a little support!'

'Very well, dear,' said his wife, and laughed again to herself.

'All right, all right. You don't make it too easy for me, do you? Well, son,' he said to John, 'the hiding's off. Your mother's dingbats. Call me when you've recovered,' he said, and left the house in a rage.

'Isn't Dad crabby!' said Ted, echoing her thoughts. She watched her husband walking fiercely down the path until he disappeared on to the beach and felt a slight shame stir in her. Perhaps she shouldn't have laughed at him like that. The assurance dropped away from her and she found herself in two minds about what she had done. But she couldn't help it—it was so funny! Still—

'You have been very naughty, you know,' she said to John who stood at the window looking towards the rocks.

'Mother, he's got nothing to eat—nothing at all. Couldn't you give me something to take round to him?'

'Oh, but dear—'

'He's been sick, and he's starving. Look, his ribs go up and down like this,' and he wiggled his hand expressively.

'But your father said—' There had been enough concessions for one day, she felt—however, Jim was out in a huff, he wouldn't need to know.

'Very well,' she said. 'I've got a piece of the pie there, it's all I can spare. But remember this: it's the very last time you set foot there. Because, let me tell you, you'll get the hiding of your life next time. Promise?'

He promised, and his mother went to the kitchen. A few minutes later, he was on the beach with a basket holding half a mince pie, two tins of fruit, a large hunk of sponge cake, and four apples.

As he walked, he went over what had happened at the house. He had learnt something, though what he could not say. He knew now something that he did not know this morning or yesterday afternoon, but what was it? Firpo came into it somewhere, of that he was sure. He thought of Firpo. After a moment, he realized with surprise that this Firpo in his mind now had never been there before. Firpo had been so many things to him—fearful, jubilant, queer, kind, nasty, pitiful, wretched. Well, he could see all of these things now, and yet none of them. It was very strange. He stopped walking. He knew something: all right, he knew it. But what was it that he knew? No answer. After a moment he gave up, and walked whistling to the rocks.

Darkness lurked behind the green steps as he climbed them and the trees at the gate were dark between their leaves. A noise. It came clearer, a gurgle, a child's high scream. He rushed into the clearing. Just ahead of him was Bruno, holding a small boy on the ground, supine and terrified. Bruno was licking his face avidly, and the child screamed, his small legs pumping frenziedly up and down. Further off, by the porch, two other small boys stood, watching fearfully. John charged into the gully. 'Bruno! Bruno! Out!' he commanded. The dog looked up. 'Out,' said John again firmly. The dog, aggrieved, released the child and

departed to a vantage point in the broom from which he surveyed the children, glumly. John helped the shaken child to his feet. He was trembling and sobbed quietly in heaving gulps.

'Come here,' John called to the other two. They came, not willingly, but shaken enough to obey. 'What are you doing here?' he asked them when they arrived. He recognized two of them —friends of Ted, and in his class. These two looked at him, surprised at his tone of sharp authority. They said nothing.

'You were spying on Mr Firpo, weren't you?' John asked. 'You think he's funny, don't you?'

They all turned round. Firpo emerged from the bach walking unsteadily and disappeared behind a clump of broom. There was the thin crackle of water on leaves. 'He's doing a piddle,' said one of the boys in an awed voice, and the other two sniggered. 'Get out!' John whispered fiercely. 'Get out! And don't ever come here again, or I'll sool the dog on you!'

They left resentful, muttering, climbing the slope of the gully. Firpo appeared, saw them, clasped his head and shouted 'Aaie!' It seemed to last a long time, then he was gone. John waited until the boys were out of sight and went up to the porch. A shout came to him through the trees. 'Ya big sis!' Yes, but you won't say it to my face now, will you, thought John wonderingly. Yesterday, they would have. Was it he who had talked to them like that? Or was it someone else? He screwed up his face, perplexed. Still no answer. He shrugged, pushed open the door, and went in.

Firpo lay on his face. 'Firpo,' he said quietly. There was no sound from the bed. He emptied the basket on the table, and crept out. Bruno came sniffing up to him, ears back, hopeful. 'Not tonight, boy. Some other time.' The ears sagged, then Bruno sniffed again and jumped on to the porch, following a trail that led him to the door. 'Oh no you don't my lad,' said John, suddenly mindful of that other distressing episode. He closed the door tight. A band of light had begun to shift round the channel. Away to the left a little red triangle was winking. It was quite dark when he reached the beach.

John was scrupulous about not going to the bach, not from duty, but because he didn't want to. There was this 'new thing' in his mind which kept him busy, he wanted time to catch it

and hold it down. Sometimes he felt it almost within his grasp, and then, just as he tried to possess it, it eluded him. And Firpo, he felt, was 'done.' There would be no more races, he was sure. But he was wrong there.

It was near Christmas, and break up day came at last. John trudged home by the beach, his bag full of books, with six weeks holiday stretching ahead for an illimitable distance. On the Saturday before Christmas, Mrs Crome took her boys into the city. First the ride in the big yellow bus, trying to look small so they would go for a penny, then at the terminus a wait while the ferry churned in, and beyond it, the whole of Auckland spread out flat. The city, flowing with people, heat, May Crome's basket filling, her shoulders rounding a little more, and her tongue getting somewhat sharper. On the ferry again, the half past three bus, and now they were walking home.

They walked slowly down the hill which led to their house and the beach in front of it. Ted was grizzling for another ice cream, and May Crome was tired. John's eyes wandered idly down to the beach. It was a fine day, and the beach was crowded. Groups of bright bodies shuttled back and forth in the small field which met his eyes where the street touched the sand. But now, he noticed, they had stopped shuttling: they all seemed to be obeying a common impulse which took them to the water's edge. Some of them were beckoning and pointing out to sea. And there right at the left, he could see a group of running men in white bathing suits, and the crowd scattering before them.

John ran on a few steps, then turned to Ted excitedly. 'It's the life-savers!' he cried. Life-savers! He could see them quite plainly now, forming up in a line with the reel in front of them. But this wasn't their practice day, and what were they doing on this part of the beach? There must be someone out there! 'Come on, Ted!' he said. 'Leave your parcels at the gate, then!' May Crome called out after them. They waved to her and ran on. They could see the whole beach now. He watched the life-savers, moved as he always was, even for practice. Oh, the ritual of it! First the sober lining up, the sharp command, and one rushed forward, grabbing the harness and wrenching it over his head as he ran, with four behind the reel, the wild dash to the water's edge, down reel, the dive in, the tenseness while the reel was being paid out, one turning, two in front, passing the

line over their heads. Then far out a raised hand—the drowning man had been reached, another command and they were hauling in, hands down now, rhythmically swinging hand over hand, and the two heads bobbing closer and closer, until they were in shallow water; out into the water, one man under each arm, one behind, and the poor inert body was laid gently on the sand. One of them fumbled for the tongue, then backwards and forwards on his back, pressing, releasing, pressing; rubbing and chafing the cold arms and legs. Then supreme moment! The body was turned over on its back, the limp hand grasped and the dead man stood, marvellously alive, and they stamped off together to join the squad, knees high, denting the sand with their heels. That was practice: this was real!

They were nearly at the beach now. The swimmer could not have been far out, already they were on the haul, and there were the two men rushing out to support the drowned man. Half way down the beach, John stood still. That head, how could he mistake it? It was. Firpo. Dead? The question had hardly reached his mind when the body started kicking wildly, and Firpo had freed himself of his rescuers, and fell into the shallow water face down. One of the life-savers gave him a kick in the rump. He scrambled up, and began running along the beach to the rocks, half hopping on one foot. The life-savers were angry, and shouted after him. John reached the group at the water's edge and learned that Firpo had got cramp a hundred yards out trying to swim the three miles to Rangitoto.

VII

Christmas Day arrived. By mid-morning, it was ninety-two degrees in the shade, but within the Crome's house, the spirit was defiant white England. Crepe posters round the walls showed Santa Claus snow-beleaguered, and from forty cards on the mantlepiece, cold winds blew. May Crome got thirty-eight small presents, and four large ones, and it took her an hour and seven minutes to open them all, by John's new watch. Dinner was hot and enormous, and swallowing the pudding after ham and turkey a difficult ritual. The afternoon was blurred in sleep and indigestion until half past six when there was a sedate walk along the beach,

followed by cold ham and turkey, later by charades. Another Christmas over, thought May Crome with a weary gladness.

John had wondered whether to take a gift to Firpo out of that five shillings his father had given back to him, but in the flurry of the city, the idea left him. He would wish him a Merry Christmas then, he thought as he tore his presents open in the early grey light of Christmas morning. But that plan dissipated too, and he did not think of it again for two days, when of course it was too late.

On New Year's day the telephone rang, and John heard his mother's surprised: 'Who? Oh yes, Mrs Atkinson . . . Thank you, the same to you . . . Yes, he's here. John? Ah—Mr—er Firpo wants to talk to you.'

So they're back, John noted. That's why we haven't seen him. He hurried to the telephone, said: 'Hello.'

'Hello, boy,' said Firpo's voice. 'Rang up to wish you Happy New Year.' 'Same to you,' said John, and then fell silent, at a loss, and Firpo said nothing either. 'Goodbye, then,' said John uncertainly. 'Goodbye!' said Firpo loudly, click, and he was gone.

In the late afternoon, the Cromes walked on the beach, meeting friends at every few steps. Then, fifty yards off, John saw Mr and Mrs Atkinson walking towards them with a third figure in baggy white ducks and a panama hat. John did not recognize him until they were quite close, and saw then that it was Firpo, clean, shaven, and utterly cowed. There was no spring in his step, and his eyes seemed smaller and duller. The two groups met and mingled a moment. There were polite enquiries about Mr Atkinson's health, and the compliments of the season flowed between them. John turned to Firpo. 'You do look smart,' he said, though it was not true. Firpo looked impossible. The suit fitted fairly well, one of Mr Atkinson's no doubt, but the hat was down on the ears, splaying them a little so that the thin brown face looked oddly young. Like a pear with a face on it, thought John with a sudden freakish irreverence. He really looked better in his dungarees. Firpo fidgeted, took his hands out of his coat pocket to shoot them into his trousers. When the groups parted, Firpo had not said one word.

'Why have they come back?' asked John as they walked on.

'I suppose because Mr Atkinson is better,' replied his mother. John detected a slight evasion in her voice.

'Now May, don't be silly,' interposed her husband. 'The boy has a right to know. They came back because they received a letter. The letter told them that your friend Firpo couldn't look after himself, and was causing trouble here.'

'Who wrote it?' asked John.

'Your mother did.' John's eyes widened.

'Now Jim, that isn't fair. You told me what to say, that was all. It was your idea entirely.' Having settled this, she turned to John to explain that 'we did what we thought was the best thing for the poor chap. He just needed looking after.' She saw John's puzzled face, as though he did not quite understand her. 'Run along dear and join Ted. I want to talk to your father.' John ran off.

'Was that necessary? Did you have to?' she asked.

'The boy's got to learn the facts of life some time,' said James Crome, and passed it off with a jocular laugh. May Crome frowned and said no more. There were times when Jim just had to assert himself to prove he was top dog. True, he held no resentment for John's disobedience over Firpo, had given him the five shillings back and all that, but something had been niggling away, and there—he gets her to write that letter. Oh, he was persuasive enough, too damned persuasive! Oh, well. It was probably all for the best. She too dismissed it.

John, running, thought: 'So Firpo's back because of me.' Every time in these last few months he had put Firpo right out of his thoughts, back he would come, touching, preposterous, and John always seemed to be there as witness, when he would rather be anywhere else. And now his parents were in it too. Something sounded in his mind with the sharp clarity of a dissonant chord, and once again he was aware of the knowledge he had but could not possess. He resolved to put Firpo right out of his mind. They were back—he was in safe hands now. But here was Ted. 'Race you to the cable post,' Ted shouted, and they galloped along together.

January moved on, and soon the holidays left had to be counted dolefully on the fingers of two hands, on one, and then in no time at all, John was sitting again in his desk as if he had never left it. The days shortened, slowly at first and then with a rush, the

pohutukawa flowers sagged and dropped away, the hard clear light of summer yellowed and wavered, there was more and more sand between the bathers on the beach.

Then at the end of March came the rumour. Jesse Cabot was coming to live at the beach. 'Who's she?' asked Ted of John, and John was able to tell him that Jesse Cabot was not a she but a wrestler from Canada, way over the sea, champion of the British Empire, with a gilded belt! To this May and James Crome added something of their own, and recalled their pleasure of the year before, and hoping for the same again, when every Monday, they and their friends had listened in to Jesse Cabot at the Town Hall, and every time it was the same: 'Winnah! Jesse Cabot!' He seemed invincible. The news made a stir at the beach.

One Sunday when the water was already chilling and one quick swim was enough, John saw far off by the second cable, a concourse; one large figure and a group of small ones, moving rhythmically along the beach. Firpo? Surely, surely not.

The group came nearer. No, not Firpo, thought John with an irony both melancholy and emphatic. Not. Quite. For the figure at the head was a titan, tall, enormously chested, with a neck like a young tree. In each spread hand he held a rock at shoulder height, running slowly and steadily on his heels leaving little round troughs behind him, legs somewhat bandied, so that he rocked from one to the other, and as he loomed closer looked like a monstrous baby. Between his white singlet and shorts a wide girdle glittered—the kids were running round him to read what was on it, and their shouting reached John faintly. 'British Empire Champ! Jesse Cabot! Lookut the champ! Lookut the champ!' People appeared at their windows, and stood there gaping and beckoning. Small boys converged on the group from all over the beach, young men and women in their path made way for them courteously, and stood a while, watching Jesse Cabot. John up to his neck in the sea, thought with a pang of Firpo's disastrous debut, a run just like this, on the beach nearly four months before. If only this could have been Firpo! And then it struck him dimly that here was Firpo in a sense: here was the 'made man,' and this is how Firpo would have been received. Poor Firpo.

The procession was nearly up to them now. Ted started making for the shore jerking frantically out of the water to get

there quicker. ' Coming? ' he shouted to John. John, after a pause, thought he would and they reached the shore together. There must have been twenty boys with Jesse Cabot when they joined him.

On they went, Jesse Cabot never faltering, the rocks steady in either hand. Now they were nearing the end of the beach, before them the cliffs. Here Jesse Cabot halted, bounced a moment, then threw the rocks up and away from him and they met in the air with a crack. Instantly the kids were all round him, clamouring to see the belt, to touch it, to try it on. ' So you want to try it on? ' asked Jesse Cabot. ' Yeeeees! ' shouted the twenty boys. ' Catch! ' called Jesse, and threw the belt high in the air. There was a fierce scramble for it, in which John did not join, and over the struggling mound of boys, he saw that a figure by the shore whom he had barely noticed had risen from his knees where he had been grubbing for pipis, and stood there watching them. It was of course, Firpo.

One of the small boys had one end of the belt and most of the others laid claim to it somewhere else. The belt was of linked steel but not perhaps infinitely durable, and Jesse Cabot ceased flexing and unflexing his abdominal wall to intervene. The children made way for him at once, instantly silent and reverent. Jesse Cabot was all good humour. He picked up the shining belt, flicked it a few times, and looked at them speculatively.

' Now, I want three little guys,' he said. ' Hey! Three, three, I said! Can't you count over here? ' He found his three, stood them close together and passed the belt around them and locked it. The three boys imprisoned, squirmed delightedly, then screamed with joy when Jesse Cabot lifted them bodily into the air. When he put them down, the others clamoured for the same.

' What, you big fellers! No show! ' They were more than content with this. Hey, Jesse Cabot called me a big feller. I'm too big for him to lift, and so on. Jesse Cabot certainly had a way with boys.

' Hey, shorty,' he said. 'And you too, whiskers.' Two of the smallest ran to him. He lay on his back with bent knees, elbows in the sand, palms up. On his command, the small boys came and sat on his hands and up and down they went, the arms working alternately like the reciprocating buckets of a pair of scales. The boys laughed and lifted their voices in a high, rich chorus of praise. Each paid tribute to his marvellous strength and sought to make

it his own, yet each, even the smallest, was somewhere reserved and intent, trying to compress it into some form which would be communicable to big brother, playmate or parents.

A shadow fell across the group as Jesse Cabot set the boys down and dusted his hands. Firpo was with them. He approached with uncertain tread, his head forward, and seemed to be smelling out a scent with the diffidence of a cowed dog. Jesse Cabot, facing the boys, was aware that a hush had come on them, and turning quickly, he and Firpo came face to face. John shrank back behind the boys, dismayed. Yes, here was Firpo again, and as usual, here he was again, too, the unwilling witness. Well, if Firpo wanted to make an ass of himself, he could do it alone. But he watched them eagerly.

The two men, of almost equal height, looked like each other's reflection in the distorting mirrors John had stared at in the Winter Show, one all curves and mounds, the other, lean straight lines. Jesse Cabot ran his eyes up and down Firpo. 'Do you want something?' he said at length. The boys whispered and tittered. They all knew Firpo. 'Who's this?' he asked, turning to them. 'Seems like the cat's got his tongue.' No one volunteered, shamed into silence by the man's presence, and Jesse Cabot turned away slightly exasperated, and picked up his belt. Firpo sidled round him, gave a little hop, and they were face to face once more. Jesse Cabot looked at him with distaste. 'What d'ya want now? My autagraph?' he asked agressively. Firpo craned his neck so that he could read the inscription on the belt. 'British Empire Champion, 1931,' he muttered, and straightened up. Jesse Cabot began to look ugly. He clasped the belt on in short, decisive jerks. 'Well,' he said, 'if you've seen all you want, beat it, will you? Go on home, if you've got a home. Go on back to your keeper!' he said, with a sudden flash of wit, smirking at the boys, who laughed with him, glad to be relieved of the embarrassment of being polite, secure in their identity with him. John felt suddenly that perhaps Jesse Cabot was not wholly lovable. Firpo moved slowly round Jesse Cabot once more; his eyes seemed to encompass every bulging muscle, up to the head, where their eyes met again, then off he trotted, back to the shore, knelt down among his pipis, and did not look up. Jesse Cabot spat.

'Nutty as a bandicoot! Do you keep many like that around here? What's his name? What does he do?'

A chorus of eager voices started to tell him what they had seen. John did not stay to hear. The whole scene had become sour to him, and Jesse Cabot he disliked. Skite—bully—all right when he's showing off to the kids—these thoughts accompanied him home.

The days shortened still more. Now Jesse Cabot could be seen on the beach every morning plodding along, holding his rocks in front of his chest. He quickly became a figure at the beach, and men in the buses could be heard, saying: 'By God, Jesse's getting fit. Going to keep that belt again.' Sometimes, if breakfast was a little late, John would walk down the path and lean on the gate, watching him. He was held by the man, impressed against his will, and disliked him more and more.

One Saturday when swims had almost ceased, John went down the path to the old karaka tree, laid a board across two branches almost level, roped them, and stood on it. He could see right out to the Great Barrier and beyond, and thin white scars of beaches appeared along the dark, green bank of Rangitoto. Before him was the whole beach spread out, three quarters of a mile of it; along to the rocks and Firpo's bach on his right, to the left the cable posts, the storm water drains, and right at the end the Hotel Mon Repos where Jesse Cabot lived. And there he was now, a hundred yards off, rocks before him, arms pressed close to his sides. On time, too. It was just eight thirty. John followed his progress along the beach, watching the rhythmical shaking of his chest and the way his calves suddenly bulged as his legs left the ground, tautened as they touched it. Yes, there was no doubt about it. Jesse Cabot was an impressive being. He passed the gate and the tree, and John's eyes, turned now after him, blinked, and remained open, staring. For there was Firpo, tottering along the beach, a huge rock in either hand, bending under their weight. Even from here John could see his frail arms sinking, and just as the two men met, he fell forward and spilled the rocks almost at Jesse Cabot's feet. Jesse Cabot stopped, and began talking to Firpo in a raucous, nasal voice which reached John in his tree.

'What are you trying to do, you coon! Trying to crash in on my game, are you? Ya silly bastard, you'll break in two first. Go on, now, out of my way,' and he plodded off.

John in his tree, felt no call to come down. After all, Firpo was a bit cracked, and what could he do, anyway? Somehow, sitting here in the karaka tree was where he ought to be. He did not know why, but he stayed there.

Jesse Cabot reached the cliff, bent and unbent a few times, and now was on his way back. Firpo had not moved, but knelt there, crouching by his stones. When Jesse Cabot was about ten yards off, Firpo abruptly thrust his hands under the rocks and tried to rise. John thought he would split apart. His whole frame strained and shook with the effort, but at last, just as Jesse Cabot reached him, he stood upright, and fell into step with him.

Fury leapt into Jesse Cabot's face. They ran together for perhaps five yards, then Jesse Cabot stopped, threw down his rocks, and turned on Firpo. 'Get out!' he yelled. 'Leave me alone, ya crazy nut! Leave me alone, or so help me, I'll bust ya head open!' and he bolted off. Firpo stayed quite still, his thin arms sinking slowly until the rocks fell out of them—he stayed a moment looking at them, and then walked quickly back along the beach.

Next day, John was in his tree at eight o'clock. He sat there on his platform nervous and breathless, like the tense moment before the curtains part when anything might be revealed. He was certain that Jesse Cabot and Firpo had to meet again—yes, he knew it. Once again, he felt that here was his place. Something was to be acted out before him in which he had no part, yet somehow he should be there, some other mind should hold it for it to become fully real. These things passed in his mind unformed, hardly tangible as words, but he knew what he felt, and so he sat in a karaka tree, waiting.

Nine o'clock, ten, half past ten, and there he was still. Few people had passed before him, not even the tardy sunbathers, since the day was cold and dull. He was disappointed; his feelings had deceived him, nothing would happen here. Jesse Cabot probably wouldn't even bother to run on Sunday: he needed a rest now and then, didn't he? Or he might be at church. Well, no. Not church, perhaps. And Firpo, well even Firpo had to give in sometime, he couldn't go on like this, he'd get into some real trouble one of these days. Thus his reason rushed in to bolster his crumbling intuitions, and he felt rather absurd up there on his perch. He heard his mother calling him and was

about to answer her, when there was Jesse Cabot, not far off, pounding towards him. While he had been thinking, he had forgotten to look at the beach, and now there he was, as if his thought had taken form. He was in the full dress rig of a British Empire Champion, white shorts, supported by the shining steel girdle, and a red and yellow bathing wrap which streamed out behind him; hands today unencumbered by stones. 'Because it's Sunday,' John decided, crediting Jesse Cabot with this bizarre propriety. Jesse Cabot passed before him, with another hundred yards to go to the rocks, then arrested by something, stopped short and began his stretching exercises there. Twice he glanced up towards the rocks and once looked at his watch, nodded his head briskly, adjusted his belt and jog trotted back the way he had come.

John stared a moment at the flapping robe, then glanced back towards the rocks. And he almost fell off the tree. Firpo. It was Firpo, yet that alone did not rouse the shiver which ran along his body and tickled the hairs on his scalp—it was the sudden dramatic confirmation of his intuition, and for a moment he was caught there, wrapped in awe, the crux of an enormous and intolerable light. Then it faded as quickly as it had come, for there was Firpo streaking after Jesse Cabot in the great, touching bounds he had made on the day of the race, and in no time at all it seemed, he was right behind Jesse Cabot, jog trotting in unison, and now they were only a few yards from John's gate. Jesse Cabot stopped and whirled around, his face blotched with fury.

'Jesus Christ! You again! I thought I'd shaken you off, ya greasy spyin' bastard! Been watchin' for me, haven't ya? Tryin' ta make a sucker outa me, are ya? Well, you'll only do that once, just once, see?' John waited for Firpo to vanish, to ignite, but he just stood there, head slightly lowered, not meek, not humble, not dignified. Jesse Cabot began again. 'Are ya goin' ta leave me alone?' he shouted. Firpo was silent. Jesse Cabot raised his hand and swung it hard against Firpo's cheek. 'I ast ya a question, ya crazy nut!' Slowly, Firpo's hand came up and rested on his cheek. Something exploded in Jesse Cabot. At once, he was all over Firpo, kicking, punching, bashing his head, until Firpo lay on the sand, shaking, but John sitting frozen in the tree had still heard no sound from him. Jesse Cabot looked down at Firpo inert. 'Perhaps that'll teach you,' he said, but it lacked assurance. He looked quickly up and down the beach for witnesses—he

seemed satisfied on this score—there was no one about. He stood there a moment, struggling with some obscure feeling, then came slowly up to Firpo, prodded him tentatively with one foot, then the gaudy robe flew out behind him, and he was gone.

John scrambled down from the tree, and ran down the path to the gate. 'Firpo!' he called. 'Are you all right?' Firpo sat up at once, gave one glance at the gate, levered himself to his feet, and began limping off towards the rocks. 'Firpo!' called John again, opened the gate and jumped on to the sand. Firpo began to run, a painful series of hops, and John stood still, watching, until the thin hobbling figure was out of sight.

All the next week, voices prompted him to go to the bach. He resisted them, because the force of his parents' edict was still strong. But when one afternoon he found himself at the foot of the green staircase he was not altogether surprised, and he climbed it almost with relief.

It was many months since he had been here, and the paths were once more tangled and overgrown. Into the clearing, and the white gleam in the corner of his eye. He did not look at the house. Down the gully, up, and there—the bach was gone. Well, not quite gone. It had been levelled to the porch; over by the broom a stack of rotting beams lay piled up and the old tin chimney lay there too, gaping. A man sat on the porch, smoking. He looked up as John appeared.

'Gidday, son,' he said. He sounded friendly, and John said 'Hullo,' and came up to him. He did not know quite how to begin.

'Are you taking all this stuff away?' he asked after a pause. 'That's right,' said the man, and took a deep puff at his cigarette. John hedged again, and touched one of the porch boards, tentatively.

'I suppose there's some good timber here. Is there?'

'Oh, the mills'll get some of it. If they're lucky. But this stuff's no bloody good,' and he kicked the wet, crumbling boards without rancour.

'Where's Firpo?' said John abruptly.

'Who?'

'Firpo. The man who lived here.'

'Oh, that nutty joker? The athlete, you mean?'

'Yes.'

'He a friend of yours?'

'I just know him. I wanted to see him.'

'Oh, you just wanted to see him? Well, you can, too. Tuesdays and Thursdays, two to four.' And the man gave a throaty chuckle. John didn't understand. The man explained.

'Son, they've taken him off to the nuthouse. He was gettin' violent, you know. Took to old Mr Atkinson here, and you could hear right down on the beach what he was saying about Mrs Atkinson, who's been so good to him. So they carted him off last week in a strait jacket. Don't you worry, son. He'll be happy now. He's in the right place.' He stood up. 'Well, I'm off. Should be through this job tomorrow. S'long now,' and shouldering a light pack, he disappeared towards the house.

John sat down on the porch. For he knew now who Firpo was. Firpo was at last revealed to him whole, as a lost man, and he had the overpowering and tragic sense of an end which numbed his thoughts and held him still. And this was the knowledge he had felt but had not been able to possess. Now it was his. He saw that in some barely articulate way he had known it for a long time, but until it had assembled, whole and entire, he could not make it part of himself. He felt as if a screen had interposed between his eye and its object, and that he had seen only the shadows projected on it. Now it had cleared, and he caught a glimpse of what had been indistinctly limned behind it. Live long, he would never be older than now.

He stayed there some time. The broom was almost bare of flowers, and as he watched, a jaundiced bloom fluttered off the bush, and sustained by the light breeze, charted a hazy course before coming to rest beside him. He picked it up, and knew, as he fingered the jaded petals, that summer was quite at an end.

COMMENTARIES

Mary Martin

A Policy for the Orchestra

IN LAST December's *Landfall* Dr J. C. Beaglehole reviewed the main problems both musical and administrative which have arisen in connection with the National Orchestra since its inception nearly three years ago.

His survey was comprehensive and summed up the position clearly and impartially. It is not my intention to recapitulate his points, but to comment briefly on certain weaknesses inherent in the present policy and administration of the Orchestra which have come to light since he wrote.

I want to question the propriety of the Government's action in lending the Orchestra to a commercial opera company. No doubt it was done in good faith, on the assumption that the public was being given what it wanted. But to have or not to have the opera was only part of the matter. The real issue was, how would this disorganization affect the Orchestra in the fulfilment of its main purpose.

The Prime Minister's decision (for he seems personally to control the destiny of the Orchestra) can hardly have met with the approval of the conductor or of that section of the Orchestra which was not required for the opera season. It is also probable that a percentage of those going on tour were disappointed that for the second season in succession out of the three in its short history the Orchestra was not to get down till late in the year to fulfilling its proper function, that of performing symphonic music. The seething discontent of the rest who were distributed round the main centres to augment the local station orchestras is no secret.

With the resumption of rehearsals (which will probably have begun by the time this article appears) the conductor will have to make a new beginning; for, though some of the players will have gained valuable experience under a first-rate visiting conductor, it must be remembered that an orchestra is a single unit and its quality depends not on the excellence of individuals but on its work as a team. Had the Orchestra been firmly established with many seasons of symphony concerts behind it, the disintegration caused by two seasons of opera in succession would have been less serious.

A second issue was, to whom was the opera being made available? The Orchestra is maintained out of the public purse. But only those who could afford £1 3s. 3d. a seat, plus a few who had time or physical endurance to queue up for interminable hours, were able to see the opera. Those who could do neither might console themselves by listening to the broadcasts, which if heard as I heard *Tosca* from the Theatre Royal, Christchurch, with another station audible throughout the evening, was worse than useless.

As if to make amends, *The Listener* has announced a staggering programme of symphonic music for the remainder of the season, which is to begin in Auckland at the end of June. A list of the works to be performed reads like an endurance test designed to break the spirit of any orchestra. Add to this the fact that the rehearsal time available between the end of the opera and the beginning of the concert season can be only a matter of weeks, and the task is superhuman. This indecent haste to cover large chunks of the symphonic repertoire in the shortest possible time has little to commend it as a policy; it means that the standard of playing will never rise above mere competence. From the start, indeed, the programmes have been unnecessarily heavy for a newly formed group.

I do not pretend to know where to lay the blame for such reckless use of the Orchestra. The purposes of the Broadcasting Service are inscrutable. But there are rumours that behind it the Prime Minister is the final authority. If so, the conductor can be only a prawn in the game.

Musical opinion throughout the country was unanimous in opposing the manner in which the Orchestra was established and the conductor appointed. It considered that the advice of responsible musicians should have been sought by the Government before it embarked on a project requiring specialized knowledge, and that an advisory board should have been set up to control the policy of the Orchestra.

The Orchestra must be freed from political or departmental control. The setting up of such a board still seems the only rational way of doing so. I would suggest for it the following personnel: the Director of Broadcasting; one Government nominee; the conductor; one elected member of the Orchestra; and a professor of music from one of the university colleges. Such a board could act with authority and its decisions would be in the best interests of the Orchestra. The present policy may lead to its breaking up before it has had a chance to establish itself.

John Pocock

A National Theatre

1. Academic Theatre

A play exists only in performance. Its reality doesn't lie in words, even Hamlet's, even Harry Monchensey's; not in reading; but in the experience of an audience, sharing the experience of an actor, yet watching him, while he identifies himself with his character, yet creates it, yet stands detached from it.

Anything we learn, feel, experience, by reading a play is ' what we say about it,' until we apply it to the uses of the theatre. The speeches in the book are the material which some one else is going to bring to life in a complex and unique process. (Shakespeare, of all playwrights who ever lived the most ready to shape his writing to immediate needs, knew the

individual and particular character of what he was doing.) Anything we say about the speeches in the book is either a contribution towards a hypothetical performance, in real stage draughts and smelling of real fish-glue, rough timber and size, or it's a contribution to history, philosophy, aesthetics and so on.

Not that the history and the rest can't be or aren't quite essential, if we properly apply them, to creating the theatrical experience; the more we know about what we are doing, the better we shall do it. The totally illiterate and somehow intuitive actor (if he ever existed) won't do at this time of day; but neither will the professor who has made a lifelong study of a play and can never bear to see it performed because the personality of the actor gets between him and the play. And he exists all right.

I used to think that the movement in the mind which left him burrowing hastily between the tide-marks began simply with the familiar heresy that a play was a kind of book. But then Granville Barker (of all people, Granville Barker) apparently told the Oxford Drama Commission that undergraduates studying the drama should not be encouraged to act because a preoccupation with acting diverted their attention from the study of the play as a whole. Now whatever he had in mind, he did not think a play was a book; but the shock of learning that these were his views is still with me. He was talking about drama in the university and he clearly had in mind ends and values very unlike those which, for instance, some of us have discovered in the last few years by working with Ngaio Marsh at Canterbury College.

At the root of the distinction between his and what you might call the little-theatre approach, is something much more genuine than the mere muddle of the literary heresy. For Granville Barker (at the end of his life) a play had become an object for study, not a subject for performance.

His experience is august and authoritative, but I am still surprised that it was his experience that students lost sight of the total significance of a play if they took parts in it; and I should want to argue against him that students of the drama must have understanding of the theatrical experience —the playwright-actor-audience relationship—and that to have this they must see plays from the inside, in process of being conceived, rehearsed and put across to an audience. But if you are educating people to have a cultivated understanding of the drama, if you are training audiences rather than actors, in some such situation it's quite possible that it's more necessary that students should learn to see a play ' as a whole,' i.e., from the outside and as a completed thing, as an audience see it, than with the inevitably different behind-the-scenes standpoint which actors and artists have. Anyway, that was the conclusion Granville Barker reached, from an initial concern with the drama as an object for study.

A legitimate alternative—if you have your choice. Granville Barker and the Oxford Commission presuppose communities in which an active professional theatre exists and does good work in the various fields of drama—classical, experimental, and so forth. Then the academic study of the drama can flourish and develop its standards and methods—though it is going to quarrel for a long time with the people professionally engaged

in theatrical presentation. But this situation is a long way from the one existing in New Zealand. Here, a professional theatre is still a pious hope, though more people than we may suppose are thinking and working for it.

Our immediate business, then, is to create a professional theatre—which includes critics and audiences. In this situation, Canterbury University College has taken the admirable step of appointing Miss Marsh to an honorary lectureship in drama. Presumably the purpose is to give institutional recognition and support to her important work in the Little Theatre, which she has done quite informally for the last six years. But in doing so, the College declares itself, and the University through it, a leading agent in furthering good theatrical production. As the live theatre develops it is going to be closely associated with the University; the University is going to be directly concerned with developing the live theatre.

This means that the University takes a share of responsibility in the general task of getting companies, productions and theatres going—of direct responsibility for performances in the theatre. It concerns itself with the establishment of the theatre, without which academic study of the drama can't survive and falls back into book-stuff. It's by means of this sort of association that the New Zealand theatre is going to develop, and the University should realize its responsibilities (this appointment shows that it is doing so). But it is in a different situation from that of Oxford or Princeton as they interest themselves in the drama. We have not the kind of society in which the University's interest in the drama can be confined to academic study and separated from active concern with the creation of the theatre. The University represents the values which call for an active theatre to realize them, and it is a centre for those people who need such a theatre and can help to make it. Since we have not yet such a theatre but have the chance to achieve it, the University is concerned to take part directly.

And on a wider view, the approach to recommend to people, especially those with time to spend on it, who are interested in the theatre and want to help get it going, is the functional and technical one. For the next few years, let's see a puritanical insistence that the play exists in the theatre and not the study, that we should go for the techniques of writing, acting, staging and producing, and read a play with the means and ends of performance primarily in mind, and the rest a long way after. The rest—which is the stock-in-trade of the literary historians and the Shakespearean scholars—will have its turn (should indeed start having it now) and we shall not be able to do without it, but to start by giving it the wrong importance would be to be out of step from the beginning.

2. The Politics of a New Zealand Theatre

What I have written so far clearly implies that the permanent theatre in New Zealand will develop in close association with groups and bodies not ordinarily linked with the professional system, and I should like to follow an associated theme.

In the last few years, talk and writing about a National Theatre has been plentiful, I think generally on the right lines, but (till recently) rather lacking in precision. The first sign that there were major issues to discuss came about a year ago in a difference between the New Zealand Drama Council and the Auckland Drama Council. The latter emphasized that the amateur movement was the true foundation of New Zealand theatre, while Mr George Swan, for the former, stressed the need for a full-time organization.

Obviously, we ought to have a full-time professional theatre—if only because many of the best members of the amateur movement have now found the ability and the wish to make the theatre their career, and are going overseas for training and experience. (I know of more than a dozen now in London or on their way there.) We are losing these people because we offer them nothing, and we shall go on losing their successors unless something is done.

At the same time, the Auckland case went to the heart of the matter, and it has been ably restated in the *Arts Year Book* for 1948 by Alec McDowell in his analysis of the breakdown of Mr Kerridge's experiment in commercial theatre. We cannot build without respecting the foundations, and these have been laid by the amateurs. What public taste has grown up, and what experience the public have had of classical, experimental or just generally good theatrical work, has been the achievement of the amateurs. Mr Kerridge's companies treated this measure of experience, and the feelings of the amateurs and their public, as if they did not exist, and broke, softly and suddenly, down. The first lesson to be drawn is to respect what has been done so far.

This is not all. As was remarked by the *Year Book's* writer on drama in Wellington, the best amateur societies are, in their social functioning as in their theatrical standards, something more than part-time enthusiasts. They have hammered their way into a position comparable to that in Britain of Norman Marshall's 'Other Theatre'—the small, professional but non-commercial theatres and organizations which have time for experimental work and carry the drama to audiences it does not otherwise reach. The creation of a National Theatre will not supersede the amateurs in doing this work, the demand for which will continue. It's been sufficiently proved now that amateurs (especially the fanatical or full-time amateurs) can, against the difficulties of their lot, win a freedom to experiment which, in the nature of things, the National Theatre alone, operating on a big scale and with public responsibility, will never quite achieve (though it must strive for as much as possible).

That there'll always be demand for an amateur theatre of the highest attainable standard is further shown by its present nature. New Zealand theatre has so far been highly—in some respects unhealthily—localized, and the best amateur societies have developed a marked local character, rooted in groups or institutions which are permanent parts of the social structure. Canterbury University College is an obvious case, and the other university and training colleges are important; to take an example of another kind, it's impossible to imagine the Wellington Unity Theatre without the

support of certain classes and interests peculiar to the capital city. There's no reason at all why these groups and institutions should not continue their demand for high-standard theatre, rooted in their own life and the community's through them; and this will be met by the amateurs.

In considering a National Theatre, then, we have to reckon not only with the existence of standards created by the amateur movement but with the continued activity of that movement, at its present level or better. The National Theatre will have to be vitally related to it: I borrow Mr McDowell's words—it must 'arise as an organic development of the amateur movement.' He adds 'under decentralized control,' and here goes direct into the politics of the matter, by challenging those who want the Government to concern itself immediately with the creation of a professional company.

Suppose—for the sake of the argument—that such a professional company, the only one of its kind, were in being. Probably—the alternative is not attractive—it would be recruited largely from native New Zealanders experienced in the amateur movement, and so would hardly repeat the grotesque mistakes of the Kerridge companies in taking no account of existing standards. But a National Theatre, permanently in our midst and permanently our community possession and responsibility, could not be content with simply satisfying and improving on our existing theatrical standards, if it did this in isolation and self-sufficiency, revolving in its own orbit without any further contact with the amateur movement. Theatrical people, notoriously prone to self-satisfaction, might easily fall into the patronizing contempt for the amateur which infests the British Theatre and, reflected even in the attitude of Sir Laurence Olivier, has been worrying Mr O'Neill in the December *Landfall.* In New Zealand it is worth going a very long way to avoid this.

Direct and productive co-operation, as between equals, between such a National Theatre and the amateur theatre, seems the obviously necessary course. The difficulty, of course, is in envisaging what sort of methods of co-operation and what sort of a National Theatre would best serve our purpose. I don't mean to do more than suggest. But it appears that we would have to have direct assistance in setting up the initial professional organization, which would necessarily have a nuclear and central character. We don't want over-centralization, on the one hand; but equally we don't want some system with elaborate administration, high ideals, no centre and no guts. You can't have a system for helping and co-ordinating scattered efforts unless you have a hard core of people prepared to go ahead and do work on their own. (General Wingate said this about guerilla warfare, and it seems to apply here.) A National Theatre would have to have a nucleus of professionals, able to mount a major company in major productions. Conversely, I assume throughout that if we are to have a professional theatre, it can only be on a national basis; and mounting major professional productions would be a National Theatre's prime responsibility.

But this isn't enough. There's a very real danger of putting all our energies into working up such a company; it would absorb them all indefinitely, and we should get no further in the business of developing

contacts with the amateurs; and such a company, immensely valuable in itself, isn't by itself sufficient to give us a genuinely National Theatre. Can we envisage something on a wider basis? It would not be simply a company, but rather a nucleus of professional producers, actors and technicians who would come together at the proper season to form a company and do major productions and take them to the country, but would be as living in dispersal as in concentration. At other times of the year, groups and individuals would be detached to work with amateurs and organize enterprises of their own. If the whole enterprise was run, as it would be, on a reasonably modest scale, the planning and timing of this wouldn't be too difficult. In a small community, you have the tremendous advantage that private contacts, friendships, invitations and arrangements can become readily effective, and these combinations and enterprises could be informal and happy. It would be possible, too, for the central nucleus to hand on a lot of the job of covering the country to the amateurs, working under sponsorship.

Helping and encouraging such a variety of activities, the theatre might be genuinely a national one, properly related both to the existing foundations of dramatic activity and to the social circumstances of the country; and there's no reason why any board of directors or governors it had shouldn't include, with frequent changes, people eminent in the amateur movement. Would the government, or any government, be prepared to sponsor an organization of such various and informal workings, and leave it the proper autonomy?

John McCreary

Life Sentence

It is an unusual experience to be able to obtain a play locally written from the bookseller, read it, and see the play produced the same evening with a local cast and producer. Yet many Wellingtonians were able to have such an experience with the Thespians' production of Howard Wadman's play, *Life Sentence.** Although the author is an Englishman, the play in its plot, general approach and dialogue is essentially a New Zealand one, which in itself, although not a unique occurrence, is something of an event.

The play itself is a ' propaganda play ' or a ' problem play ' of the type with which we became so familiar in the thirties, and this is part of its strength. Yet problem plays are notoriously dangerous dramatically. The problems presented in the play were not so much part of a dramatic unity as a succession of comparatively unrelated topics. The way in which our best brains leave the country, our sentimental attitude towards England,

* LIFE SENTENCE. Howard Wadman. *The Wingfield Press, Wellington.* 6s. 6d.

the lack of a true New Zealand culture, our attitude towards aliens, were some of the problems which found their way into the first act. True, they all had some relevance to the main themes, but there were times when the didactic overshadowed the dramatic.

The central problem of the play is one that has been expressed by T. S. Eliot as ' not a story of detection, of crime and punishment, but of sin and expiation.' The defeat of evil by developing a true moral life is not a new theme, in its crudest form it is as old at least as the morality plays, but few modern playwrights, apart from T. S. Eliot, had the courage to tackle such a difficult problem. Mr Wadman develops his theme through three characters; the professor who, having shot a man during the war in cold blood, atones for his crime by a life of service even at the expense of his own domestic relationships; the Jewish refugee who, having run away from his persecutors instead of ' making his protest,' devotes his talents to finding some way of being of service to New Zealand; and Ronald, whose crime is committed during the play, and who is left at the end with his expiation before him. He is told that he will ' feel a daily obligation drawn in with his breath.'

It is in this that, I must confess, unless I have misunderstood Mr Wadman's intention, I find my chief doubt as to the validity of the philosophy in the play. Must we all commit something of which we are ashamed before it is possible to develop a life which has meaning? Is good parasitic on evil within each individual? I like to think not. Surely the positive dispositions which surround right action can act as motivating forces without some traumatic experience to start them in motion. If Mr Wadman is correct our education, our religion, our political ideologies are worthless unless there is also in them an element of evil and a debt which must be paid.

As a corollary of the use of moral force against evil we also find the expression of the pacifist position. Dr Skarnl, the refugee, tells Ronald there are three ways of answering evil, to run away, to fight, and finally the most difficult and most courageous, ' to use all your moral force against the evil while never ceasing to love the one who does the evil.' The play then has interest in that it does attempt to say something which has a bearing on the difficulties facing men and women all over the world.

So far as its dramatic value is concerned the first two acts are as good as the plays which are usually produced by our local societies. Not only are the ideas well expressed, but the audience obviously enjoyed seeing their neighbours as Mr Wadman sees them. The main plot of the play is pedestrian enough, Ronald loves Kirstie, Basil, an old flame, reappears and makes love to Kirstie in a climbing hut, Ronald sees them, and when Basil slips on a climb, cuts the rope. For anyone who has been on a climbing expedition the return to the hut after the accident is powerfully realistic, Ronald stunned with shock and the others forced to go on with what must be done, the living, in spite of their horror, preparing to search for the dead. Ronald's confession to Kirstie that he murdered Basil brings the first two acts tp a dramatic climax which is both forceful and moving. The third act, in which the main philosophic content appears, is not as

satisfying as the other two. The author becomes so involved in developing his philosophic theme, admittedly a difficult one, that he loses some of the dramatic insight which he shows earlier in the play. The act has a tendency to become a series of set speeches, the climax of which is a verse dialogue between Ronald and the ghost of Basil. The introduction of a ghost is always, I feel, of doubtful value dramatically. It is necessary, I suppose, that a ghost should speak in verse rather than prose or the language of his new dimension, yet the whole scene lacked conviction. Reading the verse it seems to have some significant things to say, and yet on stage, partly perhaps because neither player spoke the verse well or with conviction, and partly also because both were immobilized back stage, the rapport between actor and audience was lost, and one was left with the impression that here was a dull piece of philosophizing necessary before the play could be brought to a hurried conclusion.

The play calls for two sets, the interior of a mountain hotel and that of a mountain hut. In the hotel scenes in this production the furniture crowded the set rather than formed part of it, making it difficult for the players to move round the small stage. The mountain hut was so 'right' that one expected to hear the roar of an avalanche or the rattle of a kea on the tin roof at any moment. The bunks were sensibly symbolized and a suitable state of disorder prevailed. The total impression left was of a competent production. Don Priestley grouped his players well, cues were picked up quickly and the play moved at a good pace. But the players tended to become fixed in a single spot, and although the verbal pace remained, movement seemed at times an effort. Miss Prothero, for instance, well played by Olga Harding, was left poised, centre stage, for what seemed an interminable time, with a precariously held glass of sherry. This was particularly noticeable when lines containing a 'message' were being delivered. Then the action of the play appeared petrified. Ronald described his philosophy and the reasons for his refusal of an overseas scholarship, jammed against a chair centre stage, and the refugee outlined his temptations from a similar position. Such production made the preaching more obvious but less effective, for the dramatic action appeared to hang suspended until the sermon was over. Certainly the author should bear some blame for these static moments. It is difficult to see what any producer could do with five pages of verse in which the ghost must remain stationary and Ronald is given little excuse for movement.

The outstanding danger of a play such as this is that the author, in his attempt to ensure that his message is clear, presents us with a series of puppets instead of real characters. Mr Wadman does not altogether avoid this danger. His characters tend to be types whose actions are more or less predictable from the time they appear on the stage. They are vehicles for the author's ideas rather than credible personalities. Even Dr Skarnl, who if somewhat odd is a likeable character and the nearest approach to a true personality, had his 'racial type' accented, in the Thespians' production, by a false nose. Ronald, in whom it is most necessary to present definite character traits, appears as a rather indeterminate individual and it is impossible to feel at the end of the play that he will

succeed in redeeming the evil he has committed. As a dramatic unity the play holds together well in the first two acts, the dialogue is brisk and remarks about New Zealand life, if somewhat blatantly introduced, were well received by the audience. Dramatically it is the third act which proves disappointing and a revision of this act would improve the play greatly.

The only justification for loss of dramatic intensity in this way is if the importance of the philosophy warrants a sacrifice of good stagecraft. A decision as to the value of the philosophy must of necessity be a personal one. If you agree with the ' new morality ' supported by Mr Wadman then you may feel there is some justification in transforming the last act into a philosophical dissertation. On the other hand, as the dust cover suggests, this new morality is ' really very old,' and by failing to give the concepts dramatic vitality the author leaves us with the impression of a sermon preached to a text, rather than of evangelizing for an idea which has real life significance. As the play stands it is essentially a play of the moment, amusing because it deals with some of New Zealanders' unfortunate idiosyncrasies, courageous in dealing with some of our less likeable prejudices, but so packed with ideas that none appear fully resolved. Because it lacks depth of philosophic content and true characterization it is doubtful if it will stand the test of time.

Denis Glover

Verse Commentary for a Film

THE first thing to learn is that writing for films is not the same thing as writing for publication. The second is that commentary, verse or prose, is but one element—and that not the most important—in the making of a film. The writer who imagines his lightest word to have some sort of inviolable sanctity will find himself not asked to a second helping in the film business.

I speak out of the wildest ignorance: as a simple son of the silent screen, I was astonished to the point of alarm when asked by the National Film Unit to provide its first verse commentary in a short documentary to be called *The Coaster*. A rare film-goer, a moron at technics, a newcomer even to the word photogenic, I thought my only qualification was a slight knowledge of ships.

Mr Cecil Holmes, enthusiastic director of *The Coaster*, over-rode all hesitations. We discussed the outlines of the proposed film; and he elaborated several of the shots he had in mind, patiently translating the argot of the profession. While he hastened away to make two round trips in the M.V. *Breeze*, I was left with the assurance that in the end everything would become quite clear to me.

This it began to do in the form of a document known as the shot

sequence. It is several columns wide. It gives the number of the shot, its description, the dialogue or natural sound to be incorporated, its exact length, and the time it will take down to thirds of a second. It bears no relation to the final version of the film—but this I was not to learn till later.

To make a really good commentary, the author should be present at the taking and assembling of the shots. He should, within reasonable limits, be able to make suggestions and offer criticism. But in that event even a short film might well be long in the making. The author must make do with his shot sequence, however tentative. So that while *The Coaster* was in the making, with shots being taken at sea and at various parts of the coast, it was necessary to see what could be done, even roughly, with the theme as a whole.

It is probable that prose commentary would not require this: it can grow naturally and quickly out of a film nearing its final stages. But no writer of verse likes writing to order in and a hurry. The National Film Unit is committed to producing one feature a week; it has neither the time nor the equipment to delay a feature due for release while a commentator scratches his ear for a final perfect phrase. Would it be worth it, in the event? Probably not. The film makes an immediate and constantly changing impression on eye and ear, more so on eye than on ear. Unless the commentary is positively jarring, it should slip so naturally into the sequence of the film as to be almost contrapuntal. No ' writing down ' can be tolerated; at the same time one must remember that the audience is literate rather than literary. A story, a poem, has its appeal for a few hundreds, at most a few thousands. A film will certainly reach thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands.

How would New Zealanders react to verse commentary on a theme touching their everyday lives? As it had not been tried, no one knew. But I knew, when I first saw the film in the studios. (It was then looking like an actress half an hour before her call.) I knew that I was wildly off target. I knew that what I had first done, without seeing the film, would be greeted at best with bewilderment, at worst with remarks far from poetic. True, I had a number of lyric and descriptive passages with which I was modestly pleased. True, I had a Storm at Sea running to forty seconds of impassioned declamation. But I was not providing a commentary for *The Coaster*. Lines that soar off about Life at Sea, while the actual shot shows the ship's cook calmly feeding scraps to seagulls, must themselves be fed as scrap.

When I first saw it, the film was being vetted. But the pressure was on: it had to be finished within a week. Sequences were being altered or cut; the sound technician was adding engine noises, the howling of the wind, the chuff-chuff of winches—all the ' natural ' effects. This was being cut in over dialogue. When incidental music was imposed on shots I had at once marked out for myself, I could see very little reason for an additional commentary. Further, there was, by this stage, no usable commentary remaining. (To its great improvement, the Storm at Sea finally came down to five seconds.)

The National Film Unit people are a very democratic team. A film in the making is subjected to the concentrated criticism of just about the whole staff, as well as of the director of the unit (Mr E. S. Andrews). No punches are pulled: the director of the film, the camera man and the sound technician are in the ring against all comers. The film can still be altered, and they must argue for their views. It is a startling atmosphere, a feast of pure reason. All right if you can only be reasonable.

The commentary writer then finds himself in possession of a new shot sequence. All its values, and his own, will have altered. If he is lucky he will get forty-eight hours to produce results. If he is a non-technician much of this time will be used up in finding out just what he can and cannot do, with the sound track as advanced as it is. There will be passages he will want to talk over with the director of the film, in the knowledge that he is now one member of the team producing it. I have said that the commentary must slip naturally into the sequence of the film. The shot sequence says so, too, down to thirds of a second. Mr Holmes had to be convinced that some shots were not quite clear at a first seeing (all the film-goer gets), or not quite clearly linked, and that here the commentary should clearly explain and link, should do something to add to the film as well as accompany it. Fortunately Mr Holmes can accept even ignorant criticism.

It was then only necessary to produce the commentary.

The script is read aloud by the author while the film is run through, several times if need be. I can only relate my own experience. People I had found friendly over a cup of tea suddenly appeared like prosecutors in a war guilt trial. The criticism was lively and invaluable. It was with a pang that I jettisoned a few more lines I had fondly thought to be my best. Those who nurture secret little verses have no place in films.

The story is not yet at an end: The reader of the commentary (in this film Mr Selwyn Toogood) must face the critical barrage and the stop-watch, and the interruptions of the anxious author whose voice he is. Finally the best of several recordings will be chosen.

The verse commentary is appended to this article, as a curiosity as much as for any reason. It is not to be judged as verse, or even a sequence of verses. It had one job—to take its part as commentary in what proved a fairly good documentary film.

One more remark: Mr Andrews had seen the script in all its stages, and his criticism was informed and useful. I was more than a little put out to discover that it had to be submitted also to the Prime Minister's Office. Waterside workers were nowhere mentioned in *The Coaster*.

THE COASTER

THE SEA!
Calm as a buddha or with wrinkled brow
Cats-pawed or flailed at by the feckless wind,
The sea surrounds us.

Turn now the enquiring eye
To the sea's margin,
To the land's rough edge,
To the antiseptic, salt-tongued, smothering sea;

For the sea's a link . . .

The ship!

Yes, wheels are waterborne;
And below the hatches
Is a segment of civilized world,
Anything from bags of cement
To a packet of matches. (42 secs.)

Seamen adjust their lives,
Cradled in steel,
To the steady pulse of the ship,
To curious hours of sleep,
To the midnight trick at the wheel.

Signed on with wind and the weather
It's not a romantic life—
You're a bit of a slave.
It's plain hard hazardous work
To work with the white-collared wave. (18 secs.)

The nightlong light on the headland—

How does it bear?

Where bearings intercept
Is the ship's position . . .

And now Pencarrow light,
On the port quarter there . . .

Line the ship's head against
The magical floating card,
And knowledge and skill create
A road across the dark unroaded strait.

Every shore is hostile though it's home. (20 secs.)

Watch now the insensate sea
As the round of the bows and the bilge
And the hull lift light
To blows that could swallow us all
With the lick of a wave. (10 secs.)

The watch below can take its oilskins off,
And change its clothes, and lay a table-cloth.

If ocean's hungry, so are sailors too.
There's comfort in a plate of Irish stew

And all philosophy may lie
In custard pudding or an apple-pie,

And more than in the ravenous sea
There's meaning in a cup of tea. (16 secs.)

In from the hazardous sea lies the harbour,
Smooth carpet for keels
Where peninsula hills
Cushion the shock of Pacific
With rampart of rock.

Lyttelton harbour . . .
And there are the wharves and the shipping,
The produce of farmland and factory.

The door to an island
Stands open to ships and the sea. (20 secs.)

From the hold they lift the hatches
And hoist the cargo out in batches . . .

Shifted lifted underslung
Roped and hooked and steel-wire hung

Come trucks and lux and tools of trade
Motor tyres a dozer-blade

Breakfast foods and patent wringers
Throaties for the throats of singers

A drum of oil and a case of books
This Side Up and Use No Hooks

A bale of silk from overseas
Bangles from the Bengalese

Things for farmers things for charmers
A keg of staples silk pyjamas—

All were in the hold together
Tightly stowed against the weather. (45 secs.)

Railed and baled and bundled and trundled
New cargo reaches the wharf . . .

A ton of spuds a box of marrows
Electric jugs and special harrows

Sacks flax saddles for hacks
Scenic prints for almanacs

Nuts bolts woollen rugs
Bags of barley bathroom plugs

Butchers' skewers a stove or two
And malt for those who make homebrew—

It all goes into the hold together
Tightly stowed against the weather. (28 secs.)

Though eyes upon the bridge will never sleep
The ship nods gently. Time to spare.
The chief can leave his engines
—Hearts not dials—
And every man off watch
Finds spare time occupation,
Things he'd do at home,
As the brown coastline slips away abeam.

Clouds, clothes, are spacehung—
Like the gull
Poised effortless on the sustaining air . . .

The obsequious foam
Crawls flattering to the ship
And then goes crawling home . . .

The sea has gracious moments.
Now floats on air the headland,
And the dark mountain
Dances on the blue.

Up through the strait, past Terawhiti light,
Past Plimmerton and past Otaki beach
—The long run northward at a good nine knots. (50 secs.)

The shore has seaward eyes:
Speaks to the ship afar
The winking lamp . . . (4 secs.)

All ports are much the same.
Masts beacons buoys
A tide that ebbs and floods.
On the wharves
The cranes that perch like birds,
And railway wagons
Rolling in slow curves.

But cargoes differ.

Here goes ashore
The cargo from the south . . .

And comes aboard
All that one flank of an island produces.

One product is wool
From the lush land, the bush land,
Hoisted aboard it goes
This cargo coastwise bound

—Gone off to other ships
Following the sunset west and away
To London, Glasgow, Amsterdam, or Brest . . .

In carrying it the coaster plays its part
Feeding the ships that feed the distant world. (35 secs.)

Charles Brasch

Art Gallery Policy

THE paintings by Frances Hodgkins referred to in the March *Landfall*, which were not good enough for Christchurch—that is, for the council of the Canterbury Society of Arts (nor apparently for that of the McDougall Gallery), turned out not to be good enough for Dunedin either—that is, for the council of the Dunedin Art Gallery. However in each city one painting has now been bought independently for presentation to the gallery: gifts which, whatever their feelings, the councils could hardly refuse.

Christchurch had perhaps no compelling reason for buying Frances Hodgkins's work. But Dunedin prides itself on being her birthplace, and

is prepared to take every advantage of her fame—in talk. Yet when it is a matter of doing something to commemorate her, such as making a really representative collection of her work, the talk proves to be so much hot air. An intelligently run Art Gallery would have seized the opportunity and bought the three best of these paintings of her last period, to help round off the small group of her earlier work which it already possesses, and so to give it a name which would have attracted lovers of good painting from all over New Zealand and from abroad too. If any gallery in the world had reason to buy Frances Hodgkins, it was Dunedin; and this would have done honour to the city as well as to the finest artist it may ever be able to claim. As it is, the National Gallery in Wellington still has a larger collection of her work, all early except for two water colours of the later period. (The National Gallery has just re-opened after being closed since the beginning of the war, so that the statement in the March *Landfall* that Frances Hodgkins's later work is not represented in any New Zealand gallery can now be corrected.) It is her later work for which she is famous; her earlier work, charming though some of it is, does not suggest the achievement to come; and in Dunedin (except for the one painting which has now been given) one must still ask what that achievement is. For this we have to thank the council which turned these paintings down. Of course it did not announce that it had turned them down; but they were shown in the gallery, and they were for sale, and the council did not buy them.

Why? There were strong reasons in favour of buying one or more, and we may rightly ask why the council did not do so. Three possible explanations suggest themselves.

1. The council may simply have disliked the paintings.

2. It may have thought that they were not good ones or not good examples of the artist's work.

3. It may have decided that they were desirable but too expensive (the oils were about one hundred and fifty guineas apiece and the water-colours about ninety), and have rejected them in pursuance of a purchasing policy under which no more money could be spent on works of the modern British school.

Let us consider these points.

1. This would not be a creditable reason. The personal likes and dislikes (as distinct from the knowledge and judgment) of members of such a council, professional and business men with no training in the appreciation of the arts, should not be allowed to determine what is bought for one of the national collections of painting. The councils of art galleries are trustees; and trustees are required to act on more solid grounds than personal preference.

2. This would not be a creditable reason either. It would mean that the council was opposing its knowledge and judgment to that of the Fine Arts Committee of the British Council, which had already exhibited three of these pictures abroad in representative collections of British painting

before it sent them to New Zealand. It would be a perilous procedure for trustees to act in this way in a matter in which, relatively speaking, they are incompetent.

3. This would be an altogether creditable reason. The council would be entirely justified in opposing its judgment to that of the Fine Arts Committee of the British Council in respect, not of the artistic merit of the paintings, but of the needs and resources of the gallery. The council may have been right to reject the paintings, if it did so in accordance with a well worked out policy adjusted to its means.

Assuming then that it was for this last reason that the council rejected them, we may go on to consider the policy and the means which demanded their rejection. A few figures are available, and part of a policy has been stated. Let us take the figures first, and see what policy the gallery's purchases have served.

The gallery is not exactly penniless. It paid £1,050 last year for Reynolds's *Duchess of Gloucester;* its Orpen self-portrait cost £700 in 1932, and its John portrait £600 in 1938.

These, it may be said, are exceptions. Yet in 1946 it spent £336 on an almost miniature oil by Frith, a study for his *Ramsgate Sands,* and £193 on two other small mid-Victorian oils by J. F. Lewis and Edward Ward. For these purchases it was widely and severely criticized. In what looked like a desperate bid to retrieve its reputation it then launched out and bought six works all at once, by Richard Wilson, Romney, David Muirhead, Matthew Smith, Henri le Sidaner, and Andre Derain. The price was not mentioned: it must have been high: it is unlikely that the Wilson or the Romney or the Smith or the Derain cost less than Frances Hodgkins's paintings.

Then, immediately after rejecting Frances Hodgkins, the gallery bought two Australian paintings, for £275 and £250 (Australian currency) respectively. Both painters, Elioth Gruner who was born in New Zealand but neither trained nor painted here, and W. B. McInnes, have respectable enough names in Australia but no interest for us comparable with that of Frances Hodgkins, nor are they comparable as artists. The McInnes, to judge from a press photograph of it, promises to be a landscape of irreproachable mediocrity; let us hope that the Gruner is something better.

To what policy do these strangely miscellaneous purchases point?

The pictures which a gallery buys fall into two main categories. (Pictures which it is given are another matter.) It may buy single isolated works, related to nothing else in its collections, if they are sufficiently fine or striking to be able to shine by their own light—and if they can be hung in such a way that their light is enabled to shine. But these will be relatively few. Most of its purchases will be of paintings belonging to certain definite periods and schools, so that it can build up coherent collections of works which illuminate each other and thus illustrate the artistic ideals and achievements, the taste, the whole life of an age.

The le Sidaner and the Derain are isolated works, because the gallery had no French pictures previously; and unless it goes on to buy other

contemporary French works, which will not be easy, they are likely to remain isolated. The le Sidaner, a low-toned neo-impressionist interior, will need careful hanging if it is not to be lost among the gallery's ranks of representational pictures; while the Derain, although strong enough to stand on its own, has the appearance of a not altogether successful experiment in his later manner, and cries out for other works of the same school to make it intelligible. They are interesting paintings, yet questionable purchases.

The Richard Wilson, on the other hand, one of his charming Italian scenes and the only eighteenth century landscape in the gallery, is an isolated work which justifies itself (though we do not know the price).

The Reynolds and the Romney, together with the Gainsborough and the Hoppner which the gallery already possesses, form a group of eighteenth century portraits which I suppose are worth having, but one cannot say much more for them: the Reynolds is nearly all manner, and he has given his Duchess little life and no charm; while the others are a dull and sorry lot. If these are the best portraits of the period which the gallery has had the opportunity of buying, it could have spent its money better.

Of the three Victorian pictures, the Frith is a fair enough work of its kind, but the price was out of all proportion to the gallery's means and needs. The picture does not 'fill a gap,' as has been pretended: to buy it was a senseless waste of money. As for the Lewis and the Ward, pieces of insipid illustration, the less said the better: the gallery is already overcrowded with chocolate-box scenes.

The Muirhead and the Matthew Smith, finally, are unexceptionable purchases for reasons which I shall give in a moment; the Smith is a good example of his work and one of the few notable modern paintings in the gallery.

Under the terms of the Smeaton Bequest, the gallery has had since 1918 an income which cannot have averaged less than £300 a year, to be spent on British pictures (the bequest was of £10,000: see *A Century of Art in Otago*). The paintings I have mentioned, excepting the two French ones, fit in with this general scheme though only about half of them were purchased out of the Smeaton Bequest. But since nearly all the pictures purchased out of the bequest are roughly contemporary, we can assume that it has been part of the gallery's policy to buy contemporary British work. In thirty years therefore it has probably spent more than £9,000 with which it has bought nearly fifty paintings. That means a high average price and should have resulted in a well-chosen collection of works by most of the important painters of the time.

In fact only four painters of any importance are represented among the Smeaton purchases: Steer, Russell, Rothenstein and John. There are also works by Arnesby Brown, Brangwyn, Hughes-Stanton, Laura Knight, McEvoy, Munnings, Philpot (all to be found in the Tate Gallery or other large collections of contemporary work), but the remaining painters need not be mentioned: few of their works here are of much interest; the majority are confections that would be best forgotten.

And most of the notable painters of the time are absent. There is for

example nothing by Greaves, Sickert, Pryde, Sir William Nicholson, Gilman, Gore, Grant, Henry Lamb, Innes, Sylvia Gosse, Paul Nash, Stanley Spencer, Meninsky, Gertler, Hitchens, William Roberts, David Jones, Henry Moore, Bawden, Sutherland, Pasmore (all represented in the Tate Gallery). To these may be added Frances Hodgkins, whose later work is also represented in the Tate. Without them, British art today would be poor indeed, though still not so timid, so empty, so utterly boring and fourth-rate as the Dunedin Gallery (and not only the Smeaton pictures) suggests. Its collection is a travesty of modern British painting: it gives no idea at all of its range, its strength, its peculiar imaginative qualities, or even its limitations.

It is this paltry collection, then, that is the result of the gallery's 'policy' (or its nearest approach to one), pursued for thirty years at an expenditure of, at the very least, some £9,000. It is hard to contemplate it without shame and anger.

Some remarks of the president of the Art Gallery Society at its annual meeting, as reported in the press, make it clear that the Dunedin Gallery still thinks in terms of masterpieces. It was the policy of the committee, he said, 'to have a few pictures of real merit rather than a larger number of pictures of only fair merit.'

It is folly for New Zealand galleries to aim at masterpieces. They cannot afford them; they will simply have the inferior large works of great names foisted on them. Dunedin's Reynolds is an example of this. Expensive pictures are not necessarily good, nor good ones necessarily expensive. It is not by great means, but by knowledge, taste, and discernment, that fine collections of paintings are built up—witness those of Sir Michael Sadler or Sir Hugh Walpole, which will be familiar to anyone connected with an art gallery. The Dunedin Gallery is not in need of money, as its president claims: it is in need of a policy: to buy 'a few pictures of real merit' is no policy at all.

This sad tale recalls the accounts of the maladministration of the Chantrey Bequest which appeared in English journals earlier this year (*The Listener* of January 13 and February 15, *The New Statesman* of January 15, *Picture Post* of January 22, etc.). They provide a classic example of how to waste money on bad work. For an example of how to spend it well on good work, we need only go to the Wakefield Collection of contemporary British water colours, drawings and prints, which is being shown this year throughout New Zealand, thanks to the British Council. The collection, it is stated, cost £3,000; and the present show of more than two hundred works is only a selection from it. The show is not altogether a model one; it includes some inferior work, and there are surprising gaps in it. But it is fairly representative: it contains a good range of work; and it does give an idea of the quality of contemporary British art.

The Dunedin Gallery, if it had used its money wisely, could have had a collection not unworthy of comparison with this, whether in oils, or water colour, or black and white. Instead, like other New Zealand galleries, it has bought without knowledge, without taste, and without plan, and

like them is a hopeless jumble. In each the visitor is faced with the same dreary miscellany of the pseudo-art of the past seventy years, in genre and landscape, which completely swamps the isolated works of a dozen other schools and periods scattered forlornly through it.

Why are our galleries so bad? Why, when our museums are so conspicuously good? (and they are good not only because of their incomparable New Zealand material.) It is not that the museums are better off, or have had greater opportunities. Without large resources, they have yet been able to build up representative collections in certain well-defined fields, whether of Egyptian pre-dynastic pottery, Japanese armour, Greek coins, Melanesian culture. From time to time some gift or bequest may have allowed them to develop, however modestly, new fields into which they would not have ventured otherwise; in every case they have made rational use of their resources, so that any object in a given field can be seen in its context, related to other objects and to the field as a whole.

Granted that in this museums have the easier task, that artefacts are both simpler to judge and cheaper to buy than works of fine art, still some explanation is needed for the glaring contrast between our museums, which are rich and various, coherent, professional, and our galleries, which are wretchedly poor, confused, and in the most wasteful and depressing sense amateurish.

I think the main reason is clear enough. The museums are each run by a trained, professional director, who is responsible for policy, that is, for defining the fields to be built up, and deciding the objects to be bought. He is answerable to a council or board of trustees, but it is not their place to take part in the work of the museum.

The galleries are run by their trustees (eighteen of them in Dunedin), committees of local 'amateurs' whose knowledge of painting is usually confined to what they have seen in New Zealand or on a hurried tour of England, assisted by a curator or keeper who in some cases may be no better equipped than themselves. They have to frame policy, if they can; they have to pass every painting that is bought. The state of the New Zealand galleries makes it clear that no real policies have ever been framed —or if framed have not been followed, and that paintings are seldom bought except for their negative qualities: their chief merit must be not to offend any one on the council. That lets in almost anything that looks familiar, and keeps out almost anything that looks unfamiliar, irrespective of artistic merit. Hence the rejection of Frances Hodgkins's paintings: they were damned because they were 'different,' that is, precisely for their richness and beauty.

It is useless for the councils of galleries to be advised by eminent bodies such as the National Art Collections Fund in London that a painting is good, or even that it is worth the price asked for it. For they have then to decide how that painting would add to the collection of their gallery, and whether it would be a good purchase in relation to the gallery's policy and means. And they have shown that they are incapable of doing so. It is not their fault: they are doing work for which they are not fitted and which they should never have undertaken.

The conclusion is plain. If New Zealand is ever to have good collections of painting its galleries must be put under professional directors responsible for policy and for buying; that is, men trained for their work, by experience in properly run galleries (which means overseas ones) and as students of the history of art: they should be both scholars and in the true sense amateurs. Local councils would still have to act as trustees, and directors would be responsible to them. This might mean spending more on salaries and less on purchases; so be it: with a good director it would also mean no waste, and therefore much better collections for a good deal less money. We could hardly do worse than under the present system.

If the new director of the National Gallery in Wellington is given real responsibility, we may hope for a fresh start there. The Gallery's purchases will be watched with the closest interest.

REVIEWS

THE CUNNINGHAMS. David Ballantyne. *The Vanguard Press, New York.*

THIS novel in many ways might just as well have been published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. as a case history supplement to *Littledene*. To say this is not to dismiss it as a novel, since who but professors of 'English' know what a novel should be. But it does indicate the flavour of the work, which smacks loudly of a mobile recording unit, albeit a remarkably sensitive one. Thus immediately one is thrown up against the problem which has in every sense diverted the reviewers of Frank Sargeson and Dan Davin—is it a true record, a fair picture, and do these things equal or can they comprehend art? These are large questions to which one can only return small personal estimates, so perhaps it would be best to approach obliquely by analyzing the form and content of the picture presented.

The Cunninghams displays not one but three protagonists from the New Zealand lower middle class and its values, with their antagonist, the society which bred them. The tensions arise out of the struggle of three members of the Cunningham family, the mother, the father, and the eldest son among their four children, to realize that unattainable deposit of their milieu, 'The right to be happy.' This phrase by its horrid truth brings Mr Ballantyne to the marrow of his subject, since it is indeed, in parlance and practice, the nearest we have come to a 'philosophy of life.' The form of the novel is consequently dictated by the contrasting of the search of the three protagonists, although this form, roughly three tracks of episode told in parallel, might equally have arisen from what is now the norm in New Zealand prose—the short story of situation. It enables the author

to obtain a modulated contrast of mood and pace, but owing to the brevity of the episodes and their peculiar numbered format it also bestows on the style a rather short-winded air.

Man, woman and child, exhausted, unreconciled and vulnerable respectively, the Cunninghams are the self-defeated who cannot rise above an inadequate and impossible aim or realize that this is what is bedevilling them. As Thurber pathetically has it of the middle middle class, ' well we're all disenchanted,' though the Cunninghams are disenchanted with their achievement and not with the principle of rosy magic.

The novel is shrewdly set in the transitional year of 1936, when the party of the Cunninghams has arrived at power and the depression has been driven from the front porch towards the kitchen. The father, Gil, however, has been finally defeated by a spell in the freezing chambers, in search of a little extra money, which completes the ruin of his health begun in France in the first World War. Exhausted and waiting on a dilatory pension, his conversations and interior monologues serve as commentary on the futility of obedience to the *mores* of the tribe, a point which is caught up nicely in the parson's funeral eulogy with its minimal refrain on Gil's ' unfailing fortitude and cheerful outlook . . .' In fact Gil's real fortitude has evaporated, leaving him where his meaningless *mores* have left him, in a sleepy vacuity, so that his life runs quietly out after one burst of passion over the discovery of his wife's infidelity. This passion itself is a conditioned reaction demeaning him into a hatred of his wife which is a rejection of their past as hopeless as his inability to make contact with his children. Thus even the basis of his life in the family, his acts and their implicit values as well as his aims, are seen to be without point. The haemorrhage brought on in attacking his wife, which sends him to the hospital and death, is the result and summation of failure.

The wife, Helen, is the first convincing woman I have met with in recent New Zealand writing and the first for whom one feels the writer had much sympathy. Because in this society the woman mainly imposes the rules of external conduct, she is the more vulnerable if driven over their borders. Helen's confused dragging pursuit of a ' bit of fun out of life ' with a warehouseman and then a radio mechanic, is the more pathetic for her mental struggle with her conception of her prestige as a moderately upright mother of a family. She takes a half-hearted attitude to morality throughout. Helen remains unable to condemn outright Marjorie Young, who is ' up the duff to a young quarter-caste,' or the slovenly Calcott family, or the lipsticky essays of her daughter into informed adolescence, yet she weighs everything in the well-trodden phrases of back fence gossip, instinct as those phrases are with black and white judgments. She is sporadically weak, even by her own ricketty standards with the radio mechanic, in consorting with the dirty and amoral Calcotts and in drinking, yet the background villains, the moral cripples of the book, are Gil's richer relations, drained as they are not only of understanding but also of the saving tolerance of failure.

Gilbert, the oldest son, is a much more common figure in our writing. He is father to the artist, trailing intimations of perception about which

the prison bars of school, sex and a narrow home are closing fast; in short, he is the presiding genius of the local short story. Gilbert's struggle to feel for his father at the last is hardly a new twist though it is a bend. It will be enough to say that Mr Ballantyne pilots him competently so that his manoeuvres do not break the texture of the tale by the boredom of prior acquaintance.

The familiarity of Gilbert suggests that New Zealand prose writers may be experiencing a not unlikely temptation to listen with Mr Sargeson's 'asdic,' and thus receive only lower middle class fish noises and an occasional submarine character. This would be unexceptionable were the techniques displayed in *The Cunninghams* capable of extension into very different fields or capable of steady development. The nett impression given by this novel is one not of promise, but of achievement. More families can be thus processed but very little will be added. Possibly the piling up of more of the same is that 'creation of a body of New Zealand literature' which is so often called for as preliminary to fresh advances both individual and collective. It would seem likely that any such body will be found stiff in *rigor mortis*.

The material of the New Zealand scene may be somewhat to blame for this sensation that *The Cunninghams* is a blind road for Mr Ballantyne and for others. A small and purposively homogeneous country does not have many varieties of the typical to classify or to juxtapose. Moreover, the nearer the author approaches his characters' thinking the more quickly he can establish them and incidentally thus despatch them in the reader's mind as filed and forgotten. No one could level the reproach that the mother or father thinks at too complex a level; they live but they murmur. Shorn of all comment, the pace and the depth of the story are correspondingly delimited by this convention of telling it in the anonymous cramped patter of a class. Consequently the lath-thin effect and the serial boredom of the Cunninghams' minds and lives infects the reading of the book, which seems both more substantial and more significant when it is finished and reflected upon. In this, as in much else, it resembles the works of James T. Farrell.

The significance arises out of the sincerity of the record and its power to compel honest agreement that it is a true record, a fair picture, a picture that agrees with what one has met in the ranks at school, factory and camp. This may not plainly appear from the foregoing sketch of the characters, because such outlines exaggerate the meaning rather than the processes of their lives, thus foreshortening them into more doleful and unnaturally consistent figures than they emerge from the novel. Nevertheless, does this truth-telling success, as was asked earlier, equal or comprehend art?

A comparison with the New Zealand short story or the works of Frank Sargeson should throw light on this, for *The Cunninghams* is a genre piece. The transcript of speech, for example, is more literal and precise than that of *When the Wind Blows*, but by the same token it has no cadence, it is in no way heightened or transliterated. It is not without point that the only marked failure to convince occurs in a short dream reverie of Gil's. Above all the characters carry no symbolic force; they are examples five feet eight

inches as it were, no more and no less. They indubitably live between right and wrong, but are incapable of good and evil because not brought within the artist's pale of seeming free will.

Does the arrangement, then, carry the burden by a deep imaginative penetration? Again what Mr Ballantyne apparently aims at is something other, since arrangement serves him in the office of sociological comment, happily free of didacticism or a dogma. Gil, for example, abandoned by his tribal gods, continues to make habitual responses when he is presented successively with a minister recruiting Gilbert for Sunday School, a gauche street corner Marxist, and, as a memorial, a programme of the coronation of George VI. Gil cannot achieve a rejection of what has beaten him because his experience does not comprehend it even in over-simplified terms. The minister receives a distrustful acquiescence which is the obverse of Gil's tired inability to agree or disagree with the radical. The plot thus confirms the content, in creating types and not symbols, the significant aspects being adequately worked out but the whole remaining just one layer thick.

The Cunninghams cannot be said to be 'news of reality,' for it does not empower apprehension. It is a chunk of reality but it is not news. Such a report on living near the mean of New Zealand existence could be well or ill done and this has been very well done. The book could inform the 'upper' third of our society about much that underlies it which has been purposely ignored. But evaluated in the widest terms, as a contribution to New Zealand literature, it is a lesser work containing much truth but an untransformed truth, accuracy at the cost of art.

Robert Chapman

PRINTING TYPES: A SECOND SPECIMEN BOOK. *The Caxton Press.* 15s.

MOST New Zealanders interested in printing or publishing will already have seen this book and duly appreciated the excellent collection of type faces and extracts, the rare typographical skill and felicity with which they are presented, the wit and wide culture that have gone to their assembling. Glover and Bensemann have done superbly well what they set out to do—to provide 'an anthology of agreeable quotations as much as a parade of printing types.' This is such a charming ebullience of a type-specimen book, finely produced on an excellent selection of papers, that to attempt any detailed typographical criticism or appreciation would be pedantic and niggling. But considering it against the whole background of printing and publishing by the Caxton Press since 1933, some useful observations may be made. For in *Printing Types* Glover and Bensemann are in effect laying out for public inspection the tools with which they have achieved work as important as any done in New Zealand during the period.

Remembering the standards of our cultural life in the twenties, the Massey-Coates-Forbes period of butterfat and Pig-Islandism, it is clear that we have made considerable advances. There are now at least a few writers and poets, artists, musicians, architects and designers, dancers and actors of ability and promise; a few critics able to evaluate them, one or two

public funds to assist them, a small growing public able to appreciate and pay for their work. The causes of this progress are of course complex, but I should say that the activities of the Caxton Press have been perhaps the most important single factor. For the first time in our history they provided, with some measure of continuity and permanence, a focus and encouragement, a worth-while format, for such literary talent as existed. However good it may be, literature has a poor chance of survival in shabby and meanly-printed pamphlets. (From the twenties, Mason's early poem *The Beggar* and *Here be Unicorns*, a cyclostyled collection of poems by Mason, Fairburn and Straubel, are cases in point.) Until the thirties, cultural activities in New Zealand struggled for existence in cold winds and soggy clay: Glover and Bensemann have provided a climate and tilth where not only writing but the other arts can establish themselves, and begin the organic process of cross-fertilization and mutual nourishment.

The material resources with which the Caxton Press has achieved this have been very slender. For hand-setting, even after fifteen years, they show only a few sizes of some half-dozen classic book faces and a similar number of display types: until the end of last year they had one size only of a single decent machine-set letter. Their presses are on the same ascetic scale: their premises, of little more than a thousand square feet, allow no room for a bindery. There must be in New Zealand over a hundred self-styled 'printers and publishers' with far more extensive facilities than Glover and Bensemann, yet with the rarest of exceptions (notably that of Harry H. Tombs with his *Art in New Zealand* and related activities) none has seen fit to publish any work save that of strictly utilitarian purpose for an established market. Whitcombe and Tombs have produced some attractive officially-commissioned work under the supervision of Dr J. C. Beaglehole: for the rest, fine printing and the publishing of literature have been left almost entirely to the Caxton Press. Why have these audacious young Davids succeeded so well, with such slight resources, in their attack on the Goliath of New Zealand philistinism?

The several answers lie between the lines of *Printing Types*. First, the extracts, the subtleties of colour and decoration, are obviously the work of civilized men, with a wide reading and interest in letters and the arts. Only such could have realized the need for a publisher of literature in New Zealand and been sufficiently interested to develop it, sufficiently capable to do so.

Secondly, it has been technically well done. These scholar-printers have necessarily become fine craftsmen, from the compulsion among such men that what is worth doing must be done well. Other New Zealand printing and much else suffers from a prevalent national feeling that near enough is good enough.

Thirdly, one basis of Caxton's excellence of production is the superiority of their type collection, despite its smallness, to any other in the country. They have achieved this superiority by choosing their types with good taste, developed through a sustained critical interest in overseas standards of book-production and type design, and in the writings of typographical authorities. In their two type-specimen books they quote Baskerville,

Morison, Updike, Gill, de la Mare, John Johnson. 'Within the council meetings of the master printers of commerce I have never yet heard the design of a type-face mentioned,' says John Johnson (formerly printer to the Oxford University Press) of English printers. Still less would he hear it mentioned among New Zealand printers, who, knowing nothing and caring less about design in anything whatsoever, either cling doggedly to thin and spidery linotype 'oldstyles' and 'moderns' (all white and no black to speak of, whence the depressing greyness of most of our printing) or the slovenly half-melted Cheltenham from the dead low ebb of taste of fifty years ago, or rush into a completely unsuitable use of recent sanserifs or egyptians. 'God help the while, a bad world I say!'

It is not easy to say what constitutes a good type-face. A certain fundamental practicality or legibility goes with a right balance of black and white; the eye likes a clear-cut design, a definite harmonious pattern of verticals, curves, serifs; mood, tradition and individual taste have also something to do with it, and suitability of type to paper and to subject matter. These are subtleties whose existence too many printers do not even suspect, but which the Caxton Press have thoroughly mastered.

Fourthly, typography. (There live but three good typographers unhanged in New Zealand; and two of them are fat, and grow old.) 'Typography may be defined,' Stanley Morison is quoted in Caxton's first type-specimen book, 'as the craft of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose; of so arranging the letters, distributing the space and controlling the type as to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text.' This may be all right as a caution against typographical irrelevance, but it wholly fails to define the essential art of typography. It is the perfect expression of the mean rationalism of the 'display compositor' or the layout-artist of the advertising agencies. A much more fruitful definition would be one which saw in typography the visual art to which musical composition is the auditory counterpart. The musician delights in the skilful arrangement of subtle combinations and sequences of sound, woven into an adequately completed pattern: the typographer, using equivalent elements—the well-cut letter, harmonious decoration, subtleties of colour, balance, size, 'weight,' spacing—must make a satisfying visual whole. The appeal, in short, must be sensual. The requirements for beauty in the printed page are as elsewhere those of St Thomas Aquinas—clarity, consonance and splendour. Morison's definition forgets the consonance and the splendour. Without the *furor typographicus*, the purely sensual delight in a good letter, a bold contrast, a subtle balance of colour or page-shape, your printer is no typographer but a dull dog. We can have too much sense, too little sensibility, about typography. 'An A is an A,' says Eric Gill with some truth, but it can also be a magnificent wood-cut initial by Merv Taylor.

Fortunately Glover and Bensemann are not unduly swayed by sweetly reasonable definitions. Glover is perhaps at his best when there is absolutely no text of which to aid the reader's comprehension; no one has ever bettered his purely decorative arrangements of the Caslon fleurons or the lovely games he plays when he marshalls the alphabets in coloured ranks.

Bensemann's beautiful drawing of the suffering Chopin, his splendid hand-lettering and fine initial letters have nothing whatever to do with comprehension. The directors of the Caxton Press clearly love lettering and decoration for their own sweet sakes: the texts in *Printing Types* are pretexts, frankly and unashamed.

These two together, here as in all their work, make up a splendid typographical team: the qualities of each support those of the other, the man of letters and the artist both turned craftsmen and actively responsible for the work they plan. Both have a nice balance of idealism and practicality, and both fortunately have a sense of humour as well as dogged pertinacity of purpose. It is an association that has been and continues extremely fruitful for New Zealand letters.

R. W. Lowry

COUNTIES AT THE CROSSROADS. Erle B. Dalmer and Harold S. Southern. *The Caxton Press.* 7s. 6d.

I WISH I could remember who said democracy was ' apoplexy at the centre and anaemia at the extremities,' because the phrase brilliantly summarizes the defects of the system of representative government which began to emerge in English-speaking countries somewhere about the middle of the nineteenth century. In New Zealand, over-centralization has been noted as an evil by every competent student of our system of government for more than half a century; it has been condemned by not a few Ministers of the Crown; and at times there have been determined efforts to find a remedy. But the disease has not been cured; on the contrary, it seems to grow worse with every extension of the State's functions.

Anyone who tries to find why this is so, will be brought hard against Shaw's proposition that progress in politics is impeded by confusion of terms and that sensible political discussion will never be practicable till we compile a dictionary of political terms. Any gathering of politically intelligent New Zealanders would readily accept the proposition that over-centralization in government is harmful. But it would be very difficult to extract from them a clear and agreed statement of what they meant by centralization and what specific evils they attributed to it. Here, I suspect, is part of the reason why centralization goes on apace in a country where the great majority of citizens are convinced that it is harmful. The first requisite of political reform is precise diagnosis of the evil to be cured; and the first requisite of precise diagnosis is precision in the use of words. It may fairly be objected that this is a counsel of perfection and that the terms used in political discussion have so many shades of meaning that the precision attainable in sciences with their own terminologies is out of reach. Though this is true enough, it is nevertheless possible for serious writers on political subjects to reach a higher level of precision than is attained in popular discussion; and the level of precision they reach will be the measure of the practical usefulness of their work.

In their book *Counties at the Crossroads,* Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern have brought to bear on the problem of centralization an expert knowledge of both local and central administration. Their analysis of the faults of the existing local government system is careful, shrewd, and constructive and, since local government reform is one of the necessary conditions of decentralization, their contribution to the subject is of real value. But when they come to their main theme, which is the threat to political freedom inherent in centralization, they are unconvincing because their standards of precision deteriorate. When one ascends from administrative science to political philosophy, care in the use of words becomes more, and not less, important.

'Our choice to-day is between strong local government and greater centralization—to-morrow it may be between democracy and tyranny . . .' To measure the truth in this characteristic statement by Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern, it is first necessary to know what is meant by the word 'centralization.' As far as I know, the term 'centralization' first began to appear in English political discussion during the great administrative reforms of the 1830's. It connoted, not the extension of the central government's powers at the expense of local government, but the rapid supplanting of direct democracy (as seen in the parish vestries) by a paid civil service. Care of the poor and maintenance of the roads, to take two examples, ceased to be the responsibility of the unpaid amateur and passed to the paid expert. However inevitable such a development may have been, it opened a gap between the citizen and the State which has widened with frightening rapidity and frightening consequences. It is centralization in this sense that Sir James Hight has in mind when he writes, in a preface to *Counties at the Crossroads:* 'If democracy is to be a living force, the individual must have an active, direct, personal share in governmental functioning. How small is the part played by the citizen in our centralized democracies to-day and how rare are the occasions on which he acts compared with the citizen in the ancient democracies, both in law-making and in administration.'

To an extent which is often exaggerated, local bodies do help to give citizens an 'active, direct, personal share in governmental functioning.' At a guess, about seven thousand New Zealanders are members of local bodies; and, thanks to the committee system, they learn a good deal about the realities of administration—more, probably, than most members of Parliament. But for the rest of the citizenry, local bodies are as abstract and as alien to them as is 'the Government.' It was only during the war, through such organizations as E.P.S. and the Home Guard, that New Zealanders recaptured briefly what has been lost to the English peoples for a century or more—a feeling that their common welfare and security depended on their common efforts and a realization that the State was nothing more exalted than an expression of this interdependence. How to get back this spirit is a problem requiring for its solution far more fundamental changes than a revival of local government.

Nowadays, however, those who condemn centralization in government do not mean by this term the transfer of the work of government from the citizenry as a whole to a special class of paid State employees. They mean

simply the unwillingness or inability of those who have power to delegate that power, with the consequence that a few people make, or try to make, an impossibly large number of decisions. At the centre, this means many bad decisions and much waste of time; at the periphery it means that men of knowledge and ability will not interest themselves in government because they know that responsibility will be denied to them. It is true that a well-designed system of local government can do much to relieve this congestion at the centre; it is not true that ' our choice to-day is between strong local government and greater centralization,' because in the modern State the local body is only one of several types of authority to which power can be delegated. There are, for instance, many functions of government which cannot be delegated to local bodies but can be delegated to statutory corporations—broadcasting being an obvious example. Again, within the departmental machine itself, much can be done to ease the burden on the centre by increasing the powers and responsibilities of local branches. An interesting example of this is the New Zealand Education Department's establishment of an autonomous branch in Auckland.

It can, however, be granted that local government could make a major contribution to the decentralization of government in New Zealand, and it remains to consider the proposals of Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern for increasing the powers of local bodies. They have seen clearly that the present system of local government functions so badly that an attempt to add to the powers of existing local bodies would merely create confusion and waste of effort and would therefore inevitably increase the co-ordinating functions of the central authority. They have also understood that the core of the problem of local government reform, particularly in the country districts, lies in the delimitation of areas. All save two or three county councils function over areas which modern transport facilities have made ridiculously small. After considering the merits of the provincial areas, the Main Highways Districts, and the districts of the largest ad hoc authorities, Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern plump for the twenty-five regions of the Town Planning Act as the territorial basis of their reformed local government system. On the assumption that so sweeping a change is practicable, the choice has much to commend it, but it is unlucky that Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern wrote their book before the Local Government Commission had begun to show something of its capacities. It would have been interesting to get from them an opinion as to the possibilities of this method of working towards rational local government areas.

Where I part company with Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern is at the point where they propose a precise division of the subjects with which the central government and local bodies are to deal. ' Regional councils,' they say, ' should possess more than statutory powers limited by the doctrine of ultra vires to exact interpretations of sections of enabling acts. They should be granted the rights of a person to do anything . . . that is not specifically forbidden by statute.' This, in effect, means federal government; and, at best, federal systems are an unsatisfactory compromise. Mr Dalmer and Mr Southern propose that ' major transportation ' should be State controlled and ' regional transportation' locally controlled, that ' major industry '

should be State controlled and 'minor industry' locally controlled, and that soil conservation should be an exclusively local function. These are plain absurdities; any attempt to divide powers in this manner would bring administrative chaos. It seems to me necessary to recognize that most functions of government are neither exclusively central nor exclusively local and that the way to decentralize is not to attempt a rigid definition of the powers of central and local authorities, but to work out a technique of administrative co-operation. In this connection there is much to be said for the English device of 'preparation of schemes' whereby local authorities are required to submit to the centre detailed schemes for the carrying out within their areas of certain functions of government. The centre leaves it to the local authority to decide how best a national policy can be adapted to the requirements of a particular locality; it does not require uniformity but it does insist on minimum standards of efficiency and on conformity to certain broad national objectives. I believe that this method could be applied in New Zealand to education, housing, public health, soil conservation, river control, control of the liquor traffic, and to a variety of other activities in which departmental and local authorities are at present treading on one another's heels.

Local government in England is more firmly established than in any other country. Its strength is not wholly or mainly due to local feeling but to the development of a system of supervision from the centre which has revised areas and administrative techniques in accordance with changing social and economic needs.

Leicester Webb

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR JULIUS VOGEL. R. M. Burdon. *The Caxton Press.* 17s. 6d.

THIS is a good historical biography of its kind, though it is not of the highest kind. Writers of historical biography, if they are competent craftsmen, as Mr Burdon is, must aim at giving a lifelike portrait of their subject; but they may seek to do more, to reinterpret the history of the time in the light of the new knowledge they afford of the man. This is not a distinction between the literary biographer on the one hand and the dryasdust scholar on the other. Such modern biographies as Brandi's *Charles V*, Chambers's *Thomas More*, Neale's *Queen Elizabeth*, and Winston Churchill's *Marlborough* are first-rate contributions to historical knowledge and yet fascinating to read. If it be said that these comparisons are hardly fair, there is an example near at hand in M. H. Ellis's *Lachlan Macquarie: His Life, Adventures and Times,* of the type of biography with which Mr Burdon, possibly for sound reasons, did not attempt to compete.

Mr Burdon's book does however remove the reproach that there was no biography of the most extraordinary man ever to be Premier of New Zealand, a man too much obscured by the burly figure of Seddon. Though lively, if sometimes too facetious, in style, it is serious in purpose and will serve to introduce many readers to the provincial and post-provincial

period of New Zealand history and, we may hope, restore Vogel to his rightful place among New Zealand's leading men. It would seem that there are few family papers—no doubt Vogel was too much engrossed in journalism and politics to write many private letters, let alone keep copies of them. Mr Burdon can hardly be blamed therefore for leaving something unexplained in some of the more curious episodes in Vogel's life—his connection with the *Southern Cross* newspaper, the incurable restlessness which kept him travelling to and fro between England and New Zealand in the seventies, or the coalition with Stout, formerly one of his bitterest critics, in 1884.

But sometimes Mr Burdon seems to shrink from difficulties with which the biographer of Vogel ought surely to grapple. He tends to dismiss the provincial politics of Otago as unworthy of serious notice: 'when even the agricultural and pastoral industries were being neglected [for gold], it was small wonder that politics aroused little interest.' And he proceeds to follow affairs in the General Assembly. But Vogel's two and a half years as Provincial Secretary and Treasurer were his first experience of office and should be placed in their proper provincial setting. Moreover the Public Works Budget of 1870, the central point in Vogel's career, is treated too much as a parliamentary episode, with too little regard for the wider implications of borrowing for public works such as are discussed by Professor Condliffe in *New Zealand in the Making*. The same questions arise with even more insistence when Vogel sought to revive his former policies, so far as circumstances permitted, in 1884. Was his policy sound? If so, why did it fail? If not, what were the reasons and what was the best course open? It can hardly be said that Mr Burdon provides an answer to these questions. He seems at home in the politics of the day; but perhaps he feels his readers cannot be asked to do any hard thinking. Why not?

He is less at home, naturally enough, when he travels beyond New Zealand. Such books as Bodelsen's *Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism* and Tyler's *Struggle for Imperial Unity* would have helped him to place Vogel's interesting excursions into imperial politics in their proper perspective. He asks 'Was it due to coincidence that a part of the speech in which Disraeli outlined his programme in 1872 read like a paraphrase of Vogel's *Standard* letter of 1871?' There can hardly be anything in the suggestion that Disraeli had borrowed from Vogel, for Disraeli's ideas are also to be found, less fully worked out, in an earlier speech of 1862.

The chapters on Vogel's Pacific schemes are the least satisfactory in the book. The accounts of Fijian and Samoan development are so incomplete as to be seriously misleading. If in 1883, for example, 'somewhere in Wellington were lying petitions from both Fiji and Samoa asking to be annexed by New Zealand' these were merely from a section of the planters of Fiji and a small wire-pulling clique in Samoa. They were taken too seriously then and the mistake should not be repeated now.

There are a few errors of fact. It is not true, for example, that Atkinson 'had never previously held ministerial rank' in 1874: he had been a member of the self-reliant ministry. But apart from the Pacific chapters these are unimportant. On the whole the book can be commended to readers as an

accurate account of Vogel's 'life and times.' But it must be frankly stated it cannot be said to add more than a point here and there to the body of accepted knowledge of New Zealand history. As a piece of book production, however, it deserves unstinted praise; and as a literary work it has much merit. *W. P. Morrell*

THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE NATIONS. Nicholas Mansergh. *Royal Institute of International Affairs.* 8s. 6d.

THIS book is worth reading by anyone interested in that rather odd affair the [British] Commonwealth. Its author is the recently appointed Abe Bailey Professor of British Commonwealth Relations in the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and it provides a sort of small basket of first-fruits of that appointment. Some of these fruits are good; some are not so good—they seem, if one may strain the possibilities of natural history, to have been picked before. But taken altogether, it is a useful basketful.

Professor Mansergh gives us eight essays, the titles of which seem to argue a rather random selection of subject. The selection is not in fact random, and there is, as he argues, a certain unity—a unity that arises from his pre-occupation with the problems of nationalism as it affects the structure and the prospects of the Commonwealth. Nationalism, he feels, 'still remains the most powerful force in world society'; and perhaps, though one may find the fact distasteful, he is not far wrong. Certainly nationalism has by no means exhausted its powers in relation to the Commonwealth; whether we put an adjective before 'Commonwealth' or not, it remains a Commonwealth of Nations of one sort or another. 'Of one sort or another': that is just where the crux of the over-all problem lies; the different sorts presuppose a number of different relationships to the Commonwealth in general; that is where the interest arises for the student of history, or political science, or psychology; and Professor Mansergh does well to revert, more than once, to psychology in his discussion of the processes and arguments of constitutionalism.

The first three essays contain nothing very new. They give rather the impression, indeed, that the author, whose previous published work has been mainly in the Irish field, was bringing himself up to date on general Commonwealth affairs, and has been writing his 'Reflections' and his description of 'Consultation and Co-operation in Foreign Policy' and of 'Dominion Conceptions of the Commonwealth' rather to instruct himself than because he has any new light or profound perceptions with which to enliven the subjects. A point here and there is well-taken. For example, 'It is indeed one of the ironies of our age that the speed of communications has slowed down decision . . . A contributory factor is the growing tendency to reduce the discretionary authority of the accredited representatives. The freedom of action allowed to a High Commissioner in any matter of policy, with rare exceptions, is very slight. He is becoming more and more an intermediary rather than a representative.' That, historically speaking, is interesting; and both tendencies in the modern Commonwealth run

parallel with what happened in India after the invention of the telegraphic cable, when more and more was referred to a Secretary of State for decision, and less and less could be done of their own motion by Viceroys, however able, on the spot. But such points are not very often made, and some of the judgments, taken second-hand, make one wonder. 'The Munich agreement, remarks Miss Carter, "met with an immediate and joyful response throughout the Commonwealth".' If joy was what was predominant in New Zealand, among a good many people, at that fatal time, then horror, shame and misery seem to need new definitions. In these essays, too, the old story is liable to run in the old phrases—'fully and frankly,' 'ideas and aspirations,' 'a frank realistic appreciation of the needs of the future.' A tired reader is liable to repeat to himself, solemnly, 'a frank realistic' etc., and wonder what on earth it means.

Professor Mansergh then, however, gets on to stuff he knows, from direct observation and fresh and close study; his style livens, and becomes itself fresher, simpler and more direct. He gives what seems to be a good factual report of the Asian Conference, 1947, as if writing back semi-officially to Chatham House; and, I think, strikes his best form as observer in his 'personal impressions' of 'The Last Days of British Rule in India.' This should interest anybody. One or two of the personal judgments, perhaps, date already; but the page or so of judgment, in passing, on the British record in India is not likely to go out of date. 'Others again acknowledge that, while British rule had brought great benefits to India up to about the close of the last century, "then something had gone out of us" . . . It is not, perhaps, a case of "something going out of us" but a case in which the negative functions of administration could be, and were admirably, enforced with the resources at the disposal of a foreign ruler, but that the positive planning on social and economic lines, which was the next stage, was beyond our power . . . It is on almost every count a profound misfortune that the transfer of power did not take place a generation earlier.' How true that seems; and how often, over the last twenty-five years, has one wished that the India Office, and British governments, would study not the reports of policemen and dyed-in-the-wool Indian civil servants, but the experience of other branches of imperial administration, the history of British colonial policy in the nineteenth century, and the wisdom of men like Lord Elgin and the third Earl Grey. 'Dominion status,' which they proposed to give to India when they thought fit, was not an invention of a band of politicians in London, but a growth of the Dominions; and now what was deferred has been itself rejected.

Why it was rejected elsewhere, and the lessons to be learnt from the rejection which might be applied in Asia, is the theme of the last two essays in the book (I pass over the speculation on Britain, Russia and South-East Asia)—on political and social forces in Ireland from 1916 to 1948, and the implications of Eire's relations with the Commonwealth. This is, as noted already, Professor Mansergh's native field. Possibly (it is rather early to say) there is some error of perspective in the remark that 'When at last the history of the twentieth century comes to be written, may it not be recorded there that one of the most beneficent and enduring consequences

of Soviet policy in Europe was that it re-united Ireland and finally reconciled Britain and Ireland'; but there is nothing wrong with the perspective in the discussion of the relative merits of 'Dominion status' and 'external association' as desirable constitutional principles under certain conditions. Broadly, the thesis here is that Britain was wrong in forcing Dominion status on Ireland in 1921 rather than accepting the quite sensible alternative of 'external association' proposed by Mr de Valera; that for a people with a cultural tradition of its own (not one shared with a 'mother country,' as Australia and New Zealand share their tradition) and an intensely national outlook, association for external purposes on a definite written, though not treaty, basis is a much more useful and tolerable thing than the psychologically distasteful Dominion status; that association of this sort could very well include republics, and would grow its own crop of useful conventions; and that the experience with Eire might very well be drawn on in getting settled the relations with the Commonwealth of the new succession states of Asia. The argument is a persuasive one; and the hard-boiled sceptic may ponder the remark made by that very respectable authority Professor A. Berriedale Keith as long ago as 1938: 'If no place can be found in a British Commonwealth for republics, then the enduring character of the Commonwealth may well be doubted.' If, one may add, we can get the republics into mutually useful relations with a Commonwealth so very much of which is only by a considerable flight of the imagination British, we may be well content to let that ancient adjective go. But at this stage a review of Professor Mansergh's book, it may be urged, is going beyond its terms of reference. Perhaps the Prime Ministers have already settled that point.

J. C. Beaglehole

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor

Sir: I am undertaking a literary estimate and biographical outline of the late Ursula Bethell and her poetry for my M.A. thesis in English. It has occurred to me that there may be readers of *Landfall* who are in possession of letters, articles, biographical material or other small items of information on her life and interests which they may be willing to make available to me. If so I should be most grateful to receive them at 15 Blakey Avenue, Karori, Wellington, W.3.

Any such material will be treated with scrupulous care and returned promptly by registered mail.

Joyce M. Morton

Sir: I realize that in this country it is considered bad form for a writer to rush to print to defend himself against critics: the approved method is to ignore the critic and unload one's grievances at one's private parties. However, I do not propose to defend, except indirectly, anything I have written; but I want to take up Mr Woods on his letter in your last issue.

I admit, with Mr Woods, that the writers he listed have shown in their stories a tentative hankering after the seamier side of existence. This seems to me to be a natural consequence of the hardening puritan arteries of popular thought in New Zealand. The puritans of colonies are, and have been, only half-awake. Pioneer living entails self-denial on several planes, not least the moral. The puritan in a country that is at a long remove from its parent civilization with its long experience of human passions, grows up in ignorance of sin and its appeal, and of joy and intensity in living. Men who offend a code that holds the sins of the flesh to be worse than those of the spirit, he sees as guilty of deliberate and reprehensible perversity; and since he can only judge offenders in terms of his own limited experience, he puts them, with the Devil, beyond the pale. Perhaps this argument over-emphasizes a strain in New Zealand popular thought. I argue, however, that the writer who tries to be honest, tries to scrape beneath the surface, where he finds the repressed and weak emotions many people would be afraid to own to. The fact that New Zealand writers often can write with complete emotional confidence only of childhood is as much an outcome of local morality as their apparent preoccupation with cruelty, pain and privies. I suggest that Mr Woods has consciously or not sided with people who say: ' We know these things go on, but we don't want to hear about them.'

Mr Woods's approach could be used on other pieces of English writing. A power-mad woman incites her husband to murder, goes mad with remorse and kills herself; a queen connives at her husband's murder and marries his murderer, the knowledge of it sends a prince raving and eventually half a court is murdered or dead by suicide; brother and sister are passionately in love with each other, in spite of marriage ties; a man spreads a rumour of his impotence in order to gain easier access to other men's wives; a man discovers a foundling bastard baby in his bed; a priest meets his illegitimate child—apart from mid-Victorian fiction, there is hardly a serious work from Shakespeare to Greene that doesn't offend the puritan conscience. But if one considers the murderer-heroes of *Cliffs of Fall* and *Outlaw's Progress,* the fugitive in *Man Alone,* or Mr Sargeson's perverts and petty thieves and tarts, they are all very innocent alongside the characters of Jacobean drama. The ' buggers ' and ' bastards ' are not very vivid against the cuckolds, whores, pimps and wittols of the London of Shakespeare, Nashe and Robert Greene.

There was an idea common about the time of the Restoration and after, that literature should edify by way of its noble sentiments, and of the example set by its heroes. But few of us can stand much of the rant and inflated self-esteem of the heroes of Restoration tragedy. If edification is the ' good life ' Mr Woods is looking for, I would suggest he take out a subscription to a reputable ladies' journal. Occasionally the *New Zealand Listener* turns up with a sermon in episodes.

Bill Pearson

SIR: 'If you tell a New Zealand writer or painter that he should contribute to the evolution of a New Zealand idiom in his particular field he will, if he is worth his salt, agree with you . . . he will admit that this is the only honest and respectable choice, unless he is a careerist.' Mr Blackwood Paul quotes me thus in his review of *New Zealand* (*United Nations Series*), and proceeds to an interpretation of his own. Since the point is not unimportant, perhaps I may be allowed to explain what I was trying to say—although I think it should be clear from the full context from which Mr Paul quotes.

Control of literature and art by a 'Commissar' and 'an oath of cultural allegiance from aspiring artists' are not in question. I am as opposed to such things, even in small doses, as I imagine Mr Paul to be. (He intends, no doubt, a hint of satirical fantasy, but there is a certain amount of this sort of nonsense in New Zealand already.) Direct control of the arts by politicians and bureaucrats is certain to have an ulterior motive and to be destructive in its effects, even when the 'pornocrats,' as Reginald Reynolds calls them, act on the advice of the palace eunuchs.

What I intended was something closer to his suggestion about the 'ghostly but vague loyalty that links the inspiration of New Zealand artists to their native land.' (But why the false antithesis, 'ghostly *but* vague'? Things that are ghostly are as a rule vague.) Mr Paul dismisses this as being 'only a theory about New Zealand literature.'

In mentioning the evolution of a New Zealand idiom I did not of course mean to imply that (for example) the use of New Zealand colloquial speech for literary purposes can supply a short cut to success. (For one thing, practice imposes severe limitations if one wishes to be accurate: my experience has been that New Zealand colloquial speech at its most characteristic level—as one hears it in the army, for instance—has only one adjective. And it isn't 'bloody.' This causes a great privation of expression, and makes publication awkward in a puritan country.) Neither will representational paintings of dairy farms give us anything aesthetically valuable. There is a real danger, I think, that some of our writers and painters may be persuaded, by 'building a nation' propaganda, into idealizing sogginess and making a norm of illiteracy.

We are, as Mr Paul says, part of western civilization. At the same time, a work of art is the work of an artist; and an artist has his roots in some human and natural environment. The mind of an artist should, like the bole of a tree, show a number of concentric rings of growth. If the inner rings decay, the tree will not live long. The most elaborate piece of furniture, made of different inlaid woods, will provide no substitute for the living organism.

This is not necessarily a question of where the artist lives; but a fairly close association with some native regional community is essential for most kinds of artist. The emergence of an idiom follows naturally. The need for brevity compels me to over-simplify the matter, but those who are interested will obtain some illumination from H. J. Massingham's chapter on 'William Shakespeare of Warwickshire' in his book *Where Man Belongs*.

Incidentally, I did not say that '*Tutira* probably has few rivals in English literature.' I said that '*of its kind, Tutira* probably has, etc.'

A. R. D. Fairburn

Notes on Contributors

ROBERT CHAPMAN. Born in Auckland 1922. Lecturer in history, Auckland University College.

NOEL GINN. Born 1916 in Wanganui. Has been a clerk in the Native Department, furniture salesman, company accountant, factory worker. Present occupation, market gardener.

R. W. LOWRY. Born in Paeroa 1912. First adventures in printing and publishing 1927-8 in competition and later association with Denis Glover at Auckland Grammar School. Founded presses at Auckland University College (1932) and Auckland Teachers' Training College (1941). Founded Unicorn Press with R. A. K. Mason in 1934, and continued it with Ron Holloway. Ran Third Division newspaper and printing unit in the Pacific 1943-4. Taught printing at Seddon Memorial Technical College 1945-7. Founded Pelorus Press, Auckland, in 1945, and there continues.

DORIS LUSK. Born in Dunedin 1917. Studied at the Dunedin School of Art, and later taught there. Has held one man shows in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill, and is chiefly associated with the Christchurch Group.

JOHN McCREARY. Born in Dunedin 1920. Lecturer in Psychology, Victoria University College. Has played leading parts in a number of Wellington productions, and produced varsity extravaganzas.

OSMAN E. MIDDLETON. Born 1925, served in the army and air force, and has been farm hand, casual labourer, clerk, insurance salesman, merchant seaman. Now working with an Auckland advertising agency.

W. P. MORRELL. Professor of history, University of Otago. Author of *British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell* (1930), *New Zealand* (1935), *The Gold Rushes* (1940), etc.

H. H. REX. Born in 1913, studied theology at the University of Berlin, specializing in church history under Lietzmann. A member of the Confessional Church, came into conflict with the Nazis and left Germany in 1938. Since 1940, lecturer in church history in the Theological Hall, Knox College, Dunedin.

I. L. G. SUTHERLAND. Professor of Philosophy and Psychology, Canterbury University College. Chairman, Social Sciences Division, Seventh Pacific Science Congress.

BRIAN THOMPSON. Born in Sunderland 1906. Qualified in medicine at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Since 1946, physician in diseases of the chest at Dunedin Hospital. Member of a small expedition sent by the Medical Research Council of New Zealand to Western Samoa in 1948.

LEICESTER WEBB. Born in England, studied in New Zealand and England. Has been sub-editor of *The Southland Times*, and leader writer for *The Press;* now director of stabilization. Author of *The Control of Education in New Zealand* (1937), *Government in New Zealand* (Centennial Surveys).

NOTES

I

One can seldom be sure what a country is thinking about important issues that face it. Statements by politicians, and the tenor of newspaper reports and articles, give some clue, for they suggest the terms in which the issues are likely to be canvassed. Yet they can be misleading—how misleading the last general elections in Britain and the United States showed; misleading about the way opinion is going and the length of a people's memory, and even about the light in which issues are considered, that is to say about the vigour of a people's thinking.

What matters in this is less the actual results of elections and the adoption of one policy or another than the attitude of mind that leads to them. Do people really think, do they want to know the facts of a situation and the reasons for which parties put forward their policies, are they quick to seize on the weak points of an argument and to see through the smoke-screens of emotional rhetoric which are so often used in politics as a substitute for fact and reasoning? Or will the first clever slogan content them, and will they without thinking make the old familiar response to situations which are presented to them as being, for practical purposes, almost identical with others they have met in the past?

The two attitudes may lead to different policies, but the difference between the attitudes is more important than the difference between the policies—and not only because the attitudes will affect fundamentally the carrying out of the policies. It is the difference between a people who are alive, enquiring, and inventive, or unadventurous, incurious, and passive; between a fertile, growing society and a sterile or a declining one. An alert people, if it adopts a policy which proves to be mistaken, is likely to see its mistake soon and attempt to correct it, because it will not easily be lulled into a false sense of security. An incurious people, unwilling to think, is only too likely to assume that any policy it adopts is the best policy possible, and that the very fact of adopting one at all, instead of simply drifting, makes further thought about the situation which the policy is designed to meet unnecessary: it will use the policy as an excuse for not thinking.

Reflections of this kind must have occurred to many readers as they followed the campaign leading to the referendum on conscription. It was a depressing exhibition. What it chiefly revealed is the poverty of thought common to both parties, of which the uniform refusal to discuss the realities of the situation is one of the more striking symptoms. There was a fog of catch cries and platitudes about danger, democracy, freedom, and communism, and an alarming absence of soberness and reason. Even the daily press noticed it (and the press did little enough to enlighten its readers); the *Otago Daily Times*, for example, complained in a leading article on July 22, less than a fortnight before the referendum, that 'the people are given no real facts to assist them in appreciating the urgency of the need [for conscription]. They will never be aroused to give the referendum an overwhelming affirmative vote if their leaders feed them on the pap of ambiguity instead of the hard meat of facts.' That might have been a fair prediction on the assumption that New Zealanders are unmoved by such pap or sceptical about it. But are they? Can they distinguish pap from fact? What is certain is that they have not been encouraged to; and if one person is more to blame than another for confusing them on this issue it is the Prime Minister, whose heavily emotional harangue in the Sunday evening broadcast which opened the campaign was unworthy of being addressed to an adult people.

Several aspects of the campaign were disquieting, to say no more. There was the elaborate pretence by both parties that no real issue existed and that the only thing honest New Zealanders *could* do was to 'strike out the bottom line'; there was the use of public money by the government to pay for lavish newspaper propaganda for its own policy; there was the continued disfranchisement of conscientious objectors in the war that ended four years ago (the so-called 'military defaulters,' more than seven hundred of them, according to recent figures), which makes a mockery of the pretended 'democratic' method of the referendum. But these and other such matters cannot be discussed here; there is only space to touch on New Zealand's position now, which the result of the referendum has left unchanged.

New Zealand, we are told, should be 'prepared' in 'a dangerous world' (has the world ever been other than dangerous?). Of course it should. But what does it mean for a country to be

'prepared'? First it must mean for the country to be alive, aware of what is going on in the world, and able to see itself and its own situation clearly; and, secondly, able and ready to meet that situation thoughtfully and resourcefully. The way in which the question of conscription was treated is neither thoughtful nor resourceful: it suggests that New Zealand is very far from being 'prepared,' in any sense of the word, but rather that, in a situation which demands a fresh approach, cool, far-sighted, and imaginative (as every situation does, for one never repeats another), it is making the blind stock response of a sterile society in an unnecessary, unreasoning panic.

Conscription may be a sensible precautionary measure, but the country has been given no convincing reason to think so, and the case for it has largely gone by default. There has been no public consideration of the real situation of New Zealand, which includes its resources, human and material, and of what is the best aim for it to pursue as a small, rich, under-populated group of defenceless islands, lying, at present, rather off the world's main sea and airways, and dependent on overseas trade for a high standard of living in non-essentials which it could not maintain if it had to be self-supporting; its trade being mainly with one country at the far end of the world with which it also has other ties as strong as the economic ones. What is its use to other countries? Surely as a primary producer in a world that may soon be unable to feed its fast-growing population, and as a possible home for people from overcrowded lands and political exiles. What is its own conception of its place and function in the world society? For New Zealanders in general, none: they have not been encouraged to give the matter a thought. (That they have not, points to the intellectual and moral barrenness of the political parties in their present state, when there is so little to choose between them.)

Conscription, according to the government (and the opposition), is a first step towards military defence. But in this as in any situation military defence can only be one aspect of policy, which in turn serves the wider and more permanent purposes of the nation. Conscription may be justified if it provokes us to think hard and continuously about our position, to demand what we mean to ourselves as a people, what we live for, what our policy should be and what purpose, therefore, conscription will serve. But if it acts as a drug, if we allow ourselves to fancy that, having

introduced it, we have done all we can, and are thereby absolved from thinking any further about the situation to which it is our first response, then it will be no less than disastrous: it will make us in fact not more but less 'prepared'.

New dangers cannot be met automatically by old methods. To think of dangers merely as dangers is in any case paralysing from the start: they are also opportunities, which should call out our powers of social invention and creativeness. The world is always dangerous; but the men or animals, nations, species, or individuals who survive its dangers, survive not because they are heavily armed, but because they are adaptable—adaptable and inventive. And small nations above all have need of adaptability and inventiveness.

The campaign from its early stages promised to be an unreal one, because most of those taking part seemed bent on avoiding the fundamental problems which the referendum by itself, whether conscription was carried or not, would merely obscure. A proposal was therefore made that *Landfall* should invite a representative group of responsible persons, holding (so far as could be known) widely differing points of view, to make statements on the question. It was hoped that this would help to make the issues involved clearer than politicians, the press and the radio were doing. From the start there was little likelihood that such a symposium could appear in print before the referendum. Yet the referendum, whatever its result, could not alter the country's position in the world, and such statements would still be of value if they helped to define that position by setting the immediate issue within a wider perspective, besides forming an interesting record of considered opinion; so it was decided to invite them. They appear in this number.

II

THE great art war raged in Christchurch most of the winter. The City Council refused after all to accept Frances Hodgkins's gouache *Pleasure Garden*, which had been bought by public subscription and offered to the McDougall Gallery. The Council was acting on a report from its advisory committee of three painters, all of them represented in the gallery themselves and

associated with the Canterbury School of Art, Archibald Nicoll, Cecil Kelly and Richard Wallwork; the last-named alone was in favour of accepting the picture, and this shocking division of opinion was hushed up as far as possible. The Council for its part did not pretend to know much about painting (there was of course one councillor who declared that he could have done as well himself at seven years old); but it knew what it didn't like, and protests, petitions, and appeals against the decision left it unmoved: it viewed the picture and continued to support Messrs Nicoll and Kelly. Yet while it declined *Pleasure Garden* as 'unworthy' to hang in the McDougall Gallery (the report in *The Press* of July 19 contains a number of pleasant details), it has accepted for the gallery this year, presumably at the instance of the same advisers, works by Elizabeth Wallwork, Nugent Welch (both represented there already), and Rata Lovell-Smith, solid painters all with no art nonsense about them. We should be grateful to the City Council and its advisers for providing us with such exquisite comedy.

The cause of this pretty little war was hung for a week or two in a shop window at one of the busiest corners in Christchurch, and threatened to rival in local interest even the All Blacks' tour, the price of wool, and the wickedness of the watersiders. That street corner would have been a paradise for Mass Observers; the prejudice, intolerance, and heat displayed seemed to be in inverse proportion to the mildness and delicacy of the picture which occasioned them. Many remarks overheard there would have qualified for the 'This New Zealand' column which it has been suggested that *Landfall* might run. But they were more than simply funny or foolish remarks; they are also symptomatic of deep-seated social attitudes, which would be worth careful investigation.

The Dunedin Gallery had by this time accepted and hung the *Still Life with Fruit Dishes* (an oil) which had been offered to it; and now the trustees of the Suter Gallery have accepted the gouache *Ruined Mine, Wales* (it is reproduced in the Penguin Modern Painters *Frances Hodgkins*) which has been bought by subscribers in Nelson. This means that of the six of her works brought to New Zealand on approval by the Canterbury Society of Arts, three have now been bought for art galleries and two accepted. But in every case it was private individuals who subscribed for them, in face of the indifference or hostility of the

galleries. Their trustees (advisers or councils or committees) may be fighting a losing battle in trying to prevent New Zealanders seeing the mature work of New Zealand's one famous painter, but they have behind them the dead weight of that deliberate philistinism which so many New Zealanders affect and which is responsible for so much folly among us.

E. A. Olssen

The Conditions of Culture

We cannot revive old factions
We cannot restore old policies
Or follow an antique drum.
T. S. Eliot. *Little Gidding.*

IN *Notes towards a Definition of Culture,* T. S. Eliot has not tried to give a strict definition of culture, but to define certain conditions in the absence of which a superior culture cannot exist. My aim is not to defend or oppose an argument, but to assess the relevance of the book to the New Zealand situation, and more particularly with reference to local educational theory and practice, and to local political theory and practice.

To the ill-framed question whether New Zealand has a culture, Eliot gives an implicit reply by adopting the anthropologist's standpoint and defining culture as the multiplicity of complex activities that make up social life. In this sense we cannot be without *a* culture: for the term includes the food we eat, the care with which we prepare it (' one symptom of decline of culture . . . is indifference to the art of preparing food '), the clothes we wear, the recreations we enjoy, no less than our school and university life, and the practice or enjoyment of music, poetry, and philosophy. A culture, however, will not consist merely in the arithmetical sum of individual and social activities, because the total activities of a society will be given integration by an underlying religious attitude: in other words, looked at from one point of view, culture is religion. It is important to note that

Eliot here uses the word religion to mean whatever ' gives an apparent meaning to life, provides the framework for a culture, and protects the mass of humanity from boredom and despair.' (p.34).

On the subtle relationship between religion and culture Eliot has a good deal to say, but here we may fix attention upon one aspect of that relationship, the aspect which exhibits a unity between religion and culture. The nature of that unity is illustrated in the following remark:

> To reflect that from one point of view religion is culture, and from another point of view culture is religion, can be very disturbing. To ask whether the people have not a religion already, in which Derby Day and the dog track play their parts, is embarrassing . . .

For us in New Zealand this approach may also bring embarrassment; and not only when we think of our substitutes for Derby Day and the dog track, but also when we think of our educational institutions. If we agree that from one point of view ' culture is religion,' we are, for example, immediately struck by the apparent paradox that our educational system is supposedly based upon a separation of religion and education. If Eliot is right, the separation is a fiction. True, the State has refused to undertake the responsibility of inculcating the theological principle upon which our society is ostensibly based: but this has meant not the exclusion of religion from our schools, but the covert inculcation of a religion which is not made explicit because we have falsely assumed that religion and culture are separable, and that in our system the separation has been made. Obviously, this approach raises some interesting questions. If neutrality is impossible, what precisely is the nature of the religion which we unconsciously propagate through our schools? Next, is this implicit religion consistent with the Christianity which has formally been relegated to the Sunday Schools, and which is only allowed in the market-place when there is occasion to beat a war-drum? Finally, if we should find that the two are inconsistent, what ought we to do about it?

It seems to me that at the present point the main thing to do is to raise these questions, and insist upon their importance: but one or two brief comments are perhaps not out of place. It is not impossible that as the nineteenth century liberal-rationalist ideology disintegrates further we shall, if honest with

ourselves, be forced more and more to reflect upon the ultimate values on which our society is built, and as that happens it may indeed prove that our educational system does inculcate a religion, the religion to which Jacques Maritain has given the name *Anthropocentric Humanism.** There can be little doubt, moreover, that this humanism is pagan rather than Christian: little doubt, either, that the meaning which it gives to life is apparent rather than real. Should these things happen, then the question as to the relation between education and religion would necessarily be re-opened; and in a society with the fragmentation of religious life New Zealand displays, the issue would be fraught with serious political consequences.

There are other aspects of Eliot's argument which have a different relevance to local educational policy, and these may conveniently be touched on here. The pursuit of equality in New Zealand has been as conspicuous in the sphere of educational policy as in the sphere of economic policy. Generally speaking, it is taken for granted that each child has a right to the best education that the country has to offer; that neither schools nor universities should be the prerogative of the wealthy; that there should be a career open not so much to talent, but open to everyone. Consequently, there has been a noticeable tendency to raise the school-leaving age, and to make University entrance more and more easy. And as we have come to think of culture too exclusively in terms of formal education, this may be termed a policy of cultural equality.

Now it is Eliot's conviction that an egalitarian society of this kind must display a low level of culture, though he does *not* recommend that equality should be sacrificed in the interests of culture: what he does insist is that a choice is involved, that you cannot have a society that is both radically equalitarian and highly cultured, and that those who pursue equality in the name of culture are responsible for debasing our language—and this, it might be remembered, is a fault equal to that of joining the Communist Party! The point may best be made in Eliot's own words:

> What I try to say is this: here are what I believe to be the essential conditions for the growth and for the survival of

*Cf. Maritain's book, *True Humanism.*

culture. If they conflict with any passionate faith of the reader—if, for instance, he finds it shocking that culture and equalitarianism should conflict, if it seems monstrous to him that anyone should have 'advantages of birth'—I do not ask him to change his faith, I merely ask him to stop paying lip-service to culture.

Eliot's 'essential conditions for the growth and for the survival of culture' may be expressed in terms of the diversity and variety characteristic of an organic society, as against the flatness of an equalitarian society: and that variety will find one essential expression in a differentiation of cultural function as between social groups or classes* on the one hand, and popular culture on the other. When this diversity of function is deliberately destroyed in the name of equality, culture is emasculated; but to understand fully the grounds of this argument we must first examine Eliot's description of culture more closely.

A culture, for Eliot, must be distinguished at three levels: the level of popular culture, which is of primary importance, the level of class culture, and the level of individual culture. The relationship between these levels is properly organic; each should have a special part to play in the maintenance and development of total culture; and each should be influenced by, and in turn exercise an influence upon the others. The cultured individual should not rise above his class, for example, as Matthew Arnold would have him do, but should find in his class a soil congenial, as it were, to his special aptitudes; and, in the same way, the social classes should draw sustenance from the popular culture in which their roots are sunk. Not that the social classes have *more* culture than is to be found at the popular level; but they should exhibit 'a more conscious culture and a greater specialization of culture,' and from this fact spring their two primary functions, the function of (1) patronizing and (2) transmitting the work

*The term social classes or groups does not have reference primarily to economic categories; these groups constitute an aristocracy (Eliot probably avoided the word in an attempt to avoid evoking the stock response associated with it) whose members receive a specialized educational discipline that enables them to bring traditional standards easily to bear in evaluating the work produced by cultural élites, i.e., poets, composers, painters, and others. Other attributes of these social classes will be mentioned later.

of cultural élites (poets, philosophers, and artists in general). Turning now to the composition or structure of these classes, Eliot finds the cell unit, as it were, in the family; and here again he had better speak for himself—

> . . . when I speak of the family, I have in mind a bond which embraces a longer period of time than [the present]: a piety towards the dead, however obscure, and a solicitude for the unborn, however remote [are necessary]. Unless this reverence for past and future is cultivated in the home, it can never be more than a verbal convention in the community. Such an interest in the past is different from the vanities and pretensions of genealogy; such a responsibility for the future is different from that of the builder of social programmes. (p.44).

It should not need arguing that the family, in this sense, is absent from New Zealand society, and, consequently, the social classes necessary for the patronage of élites and the transmission of culture are also lacking. Moreover, we are so morbidly conscious of the 'vanities and pretensions of genealogy' that we find it difficult to consider an argument of this description on its merits. The term *aristocracy* evokes a stock response of hostility, and so shocks our prejudices that we cannot take seriously the suggestion that the absence of these social classes may be attendant with serious disadvantages. And yet does not this notion have some relevance for the frequently and ineffectively discussed problem concerning the 'export of brains'? Might it not also have some relevance to the apparently insoluble problem of devising a satisfactory principle of selection for membership of the Legislative Council? And, most important of all, might it not afford a partial explanation of the cultural uniformity, or standardization, which pervades our society?

What explains the absence in New Zealand of the family, as defined by Eliot, and of the social class? Historically it seems a consequence of the social strata from which the immigrants were recruited, and it is this, too, that explains much of our parochial prejudices on the subject; but this is a question that may conveniently be deferred to a later context. Here we may note that it is perhaps surprising that in the course of a century New Zealand's predominantly rural economy should not have

produced a stronger family tradition, because generally speaking there appears to be a correlation between the two. The reasons why this correlation is absent here hinge, I would suggest, on the fact that we have a rural population only in a formal sense. Not only are some seventy per cent. of the population engaged in secondary and tertiary industries, but the influence of mechanized transport, the press, and particularly the film and the radio, has meant the imposition of urban values upon the rural hinterland; so that, in the main, what the farmer wants is to enjoy the advertised amenities of the city. This means a predominant stress upon the importance of comfort and leisure, and, for more reasons than one, this is inimical to the growth of a strong family tradition: for example, it narrows horizons to one or at most two generations, and that attitude of mind is hardly compatible with the family tradition in Eliot's sense of the word. Again, and perhaps for similar reasons, the drift to the towns shows that for many country people their life on the land is an uncongenial but temporarily unavoidable probationary period. The magnitude of the soil erosion problem suggests, moreover, that too often the attitude towards the land has been that of the miner rather than the farmer; and this again indicates a passion for quick-term material results that is indifferent to the future. And this in turn gives rise to nomadic habits on the part of many of our farmers; in any case, this mobility, this tendency to move from farm to farm, prevents the growth of a sense of responsibility towards the natural environment as the habitat of succeeding generations. Another reason, and that perhaps the most important of all, is that the basis of family life has tended to move from the grounds of religious dogma to a contractual basis expressive of nothing more permanent than egoistic hedonism: and this point is closely connected with the popular superstitions on the subject of sex equality. Finally, our educational system must itself bear a measure of responsibility, and the following comment by R. G. Collingwood on the English situation is not without relevance for us:

> Until close on the end of the nineteenth century the rustic population of England had an art of its own [Eliot's popular culture], rooted in the distant past, but still alive with creative vigour: songs and dances, seasonal feasts and dramas and pageantry . . . all organically connected with agricultural

work. In a single generation this was wiped out of existence . . . the Education Act of 1870, which, as imposing on the countryman an education modelled on town-dwellers' standards, was one stage in the slow destruction of English rural life by the dominant industrial and commercial class . . .

Then came amusement art—cinema, wireless . . . and the poor throughout the country went amusement mad.*

If we turn to the overtly urban communities, we find that influences which are inimical to family life (again, in Eliot's sense of the term) are, naturally enough, ubiquitous and even more powerful than in the country: so that our middle class, as a class, fulfils the function neither of patronizing nor of transmitting the work of cultural élites. In these circumstances, two problems arise: one, of creating an effective demand for the work of local writers, composers, and artists generally, and, secondly, of devising a culture-transmitting organ that will do the job which is otherwise neglected in the absence of the appropriate social classes. In a community accustomed to look for a political solution to all problems, it easily happens that the government is saddled —not unwillingly—with both responsibilities. Two approaches, in general, then suggest themselves: first, to subsidize particular cultural ventures, and, secondly, to insist that the responsibility for raising the level of culture and transmitting the cultural heritage shall be placed exclusively upon the schools and universities. Then, as we have seen, this must be done with a fastidious respect to the equal right of all members of society to share that cultural heritage: an education system adapted to a differentiation of cultural function in terms of class is considered undemocratic.

The first solution—subsidizing the work of writers and others —has possibilities; but they are limited possibilities. And within those limits it is necessary to insist that if governments provide the money, they should not be permitted to call the tune. The article by Miss Mary Martin in the last number of *Landfall* has drawn attention to the unhappy results arising from a too close political control of the National Orchestra. In the case of the National Film Unit the same difficulty is present; and though I have seen some good films about the New Zealand Maori, I have not seen one that so much as indicated the existence of

**Principles of Art*, pp. 101-2.

a Maori problem. Again, when it is a question of assisting writers, a discriminating government may do something—but not much. The poet or novelist writes because he must, in a garret living on bread and cheese if he must: and the danger about the grant-in-aid is that it will coddle the second-rate, who would be more profitably engaged in some other occupation. And this raises the real point in Eliot's case: that without the appropriate social classes, there is no strong, widely dispersed, discriminating consumer of the artist's products: a government committee, no matter how excellent, no matter how politically impartial, cannot take the place of those classes. The artist is therefore seriously handicapped by the lack of an élite capable of appraising what he has to say.

To ask what should be done to create the conditions in which social classes of this kind might grow is to raise questions so difficult as to appear insuperable. And in any foreseeable future that probably is, for good and ill, the case. Eliot suggests, however, that the problem cannot be tackled at this level in isolation; for the social classes, it will be remembered, must have their roots in the popular culture. Therefore, perhaps the approach should be made at this level.

New Zealand's record here is in many respects a good one: as noted, the road from school to university has a minimum of obstacles, the school leaving age is high, and there is an extensive Adult Education movement. It is in evaluating these developments, however, that the meaning of Eliot's approach takes on a new significance: for at this point the implication seems to be that our passion for equality has led us to confuse the culture appropriate to social classes with popular culture; or, in other words, we try to make our education system create a popular culture of a kind appropriate only to the differentiated social class. And because the task of imposing upon the mass of adolescents the kind of conscious and specialized culture appropriate only to the social class is an impossible one there is every incentive to debase the quality of the education given. This is most apparent at the University level, but as a university course comes to be regarded as a normal conclusion to secondary school education the effect is also noticeable at earlier levels. Again, because there are no social classes to fulfil the function of transmitting culture, the whole burden tends to be imposed upon one single organ,

the educational system; but this necessarily proves incapable of bearing the load imposed upon it. The school should supplement the education received in the family: it cannot fulfil its own tasks and also act as a substitute for the family.

The failure of our schools and universities to extend the culture appropriate to social classes into a mass culture produces a variety of disturbing consequences, and two of these may be briefly mentioned. First, prompted by an uneasy suspicion that all is not well, there is a tendency to call a stop to the venture and transform the universities into training grounds for industry, the professions, and administrative organs. One result is that the students who are suited to a university education find themselves in an uncongenial environment. Secondly, at a later stage there emerges the problem of adult education. Here, in the main, we repeat the mistake made at the earlier educational stages: that is, we try to give adults the kind of specialized or conscious culture appropriate to the social class, but not appropriate as the basis of popular culture. Only a few are willing to make the effort involved if anything is to be gained from this service. The great majority are not interested. That is not surprising. You cannot, or at least you should not, expect a widespread interest in the conscious appraisal of the work, say, of J. M. Keynes, Picasso, Bartok, and perhaps one could add the poetry of T. S. Eliot. Education at this level is particularly arduous. Instead of attempting the impossible, the great bulk of adults need to be taught how to distinguish sense from nonsense at elementary levels. But apart altogether from formal education, the populace (and Eliot would use the term in no disparaging sense) should find its staple culture in and through everyday occupations and recreations; and that opens up the whole question of the structure of local industry and commerce. Here Eliot seems to have in mind an apprenticeship and guild system adjusted to the modern technological environment: a system, for example, in which social services were financed and administered by the separate trades and professions, rather than through a highly centralized State machine. There is no opportunity in this place to discuss the further implications of this idea, except to note that it is directed against those features of the existing working environment that are responsible for a wretchedly low and standardized form of popular culture. As it is, we tend to accept these conditions and then try to improve

matters by inducing people to cultivate 'higher things' in their spare time. This is the sort of thing Herbert Read had in mind when he entitled a pamphlet *To Hell with Culture*. It is the sort of thing Eric Gill had in mind when he insisted that properly speaking the artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist. In brief, Eliot is not alone when he insists that it will not do to try and undo at the fag end of the day the harm done to a man in his working hours, and it will not do because man is an integral being in the sense that the way in which he spends his working hours will condition (but not determine) the way in which he spends his spare time. For if culture looked at in one way is religion, looked at in another way it is work.

So far we have looked at what Eliot has to say about the importance of distinguishing between the different levels of culture, and about the need for integration between those levels. Integration, however, can be carried too far, and here we touch upon another idea which has a bearing on our situation in New Zealand. There is need, Eliot urges, for persistent friction between geographical regions, between specialized culture groups and classes, and between religious sects, if a society is to enjoy a healthy culture. The advantages he expects from this friction are illustrated in the following passage:

> I may put the idea of the importance of conflict within a nation more positively, by insisting on the importance of various and sometimes conflicting loyalties. If we consider these two divisions . . . of class and region, these ought to some extent to operate against each other: a man should have certain interests and sympathies in common with other men of the same local culture as against those of his own class elsewhere; and interests and sympathies in common with others of his class, irrespective of place. Numerous cross-divisions favour peace within a nation, by dispersing and confusing animosities; they favour peace between nations, by giving every man enough antagonism at home to exercise all his aggressiveness. (p.60).

And in the case of religion he submits that

> In a nation in which no *tendency* to Protestantism appeared, or in which it was negligible, there must always be a danger of religious petrifaction, and of aggressive unbelief. (p.71).

When we apply this to New Zealand, it would seem that in both islands the culture of the regions is far too uniform, far too inadequately differentiated, to provide the necessary regional frictions: as for the relations between the islands, they have, like the Australian States, tended to compete too exclusively on the sports field, or, to Mr Fairburn's annoyance, in the band stands. In addition, as more and more power accrues to the central government there is a good deal of regional edging for position. This, once again, is not primarily the kind of friction Eliot has in mind: he seems to be thinking rather of friction between ideas and cultural values of a higher order than the sporting and economic, though certainly not exclusive of them. Why this lack of differentiation, and, more particularly, what might be done to produce greater differentiation? Once more, the absence *within* the regions of the social classes that cultivate a specialized culture helps explain the lack of differentiation *between* the regions. But other factors deserve attention. Eliot speaks of the mutual advantages implicit in the friction between the Irish, Welsh, Scotch, and English regional cultures: by comparison, our situation is frictionless. Perhaps this uniformity was less noticeable some half century ago, but the differences which probably once distinguished the immigrant to Dunedin from those in Christchurch and Wellington have become sadly attenuated with the passage of the years. The vestigial remains of the earlier differences are hardly of a kind to produce the frictions Eliot has in mind, though they are doubtless responsible for some parochial animosities. The greater industrial activity in the North Island is, however, creating an approximation to a city type in Auckland and Wellington that has no counterpart in the south: this may be a good thing, though it is important to remember that it is the issues that induce friction that counts, not friction in itself. Whether European immigrants would make for greater diversity is doubtful, because the all-pervasive influence of the educational system makes for uniformity, and later generations would probably be assimilated to the established stock pattern. What obviously seems needed is a greater measure of autonomy and initiative at the level of local government, and the possibility of experiment and differentiation in education at the local regional levels. It is easier to say what should be done, however, than to say how it should be done. One point though, is clear enough: the move towards differen-

tiated regions cannot be achieved by deliberate measures from above, but only by a spontaneous movement from within the localities themselves. And at this point those concerned about the quality of our cultural life can take effective action by seeking for improvement in the particular sphere in which they have competence. Let the film-goer read reliable reviews, and eschew any but good films; let the musician seek to improve the quality of his own performances; let the reader of fiction stop talking about 'high-brow' and 'low-brow' novels and instead talk of good and bad novels—this will be a first step towards discrimination; and let the citizen take an interest in the policy of his local body. But on no account let him set out to improve 'culture,' because the task is an impossible one, and, indeed, a meaningless one. This insistence by Eliot that the individual should seek improvement only in his limited sphere of competence is eminently sensible, though the passion to create a new civilization is perhaps too chronic to be cured by good advice.

Finally, we may note Eliot's point that a *tendency* towards Protestantism is desirable, and his meaning will not be unduly twisted if for a moment we substitute for protestantism the term radicalism. New Zealand radicalism is unfortunate in that there is no conservative tradition for it to oppose; it therefore lacks balance, and novelty is easily mistaken for progress on the principle that ideas, like eggs, are to be tested by their newness. Indeed, it is true to say that we have transformed radicalism into a kind of inverse orthodoxy, with the odd result that a genuinely conservative argument strikes us as too radical for comprehension. True, there are two effective political parties, but it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between them: for the Labour programme of one election easily becomes the Nationalist programme of the next election. At the moment the Nationalists seem so near emerging out of their exile from the government benches that they may afford to keep baiting the Communists and await the inevitable pendulum swing: but even if their term of opposition appeared to extend into the indefinite future, there is no reason to believe that the party would seriously suggest that the policy of extending centralized social services is not the acme of political wisdom. Nor do the Nationalists draw nearer to a genuinely conservative position by threatening to repress Communists. You cannot defeat Communism by repressing

Communists, though you may well exacerbate political passions. You will defeat Communism only by removing the social and economic ills that provide a breeding ground for it, and by inducing people to *think* about it—but the vote-catcher prefers to talk vaguely about removing 'controls' and the need to start a witch-hunt.

True, the New Zealand alignment in terms of attitudes towards Moscow does provide a measure of friction; and in so far as the Communist leads us to scrutinize carefully the principles upon which our political and social life is founded he performs a service which is none the less valuable because unintended: and if instead of doing this we shout clichés, the fault is not his. Yet, at its best, the friction arising from this source is for several reasons not of a kind likely to produce beneficial results. First, the division gives rise not to friction so much as class-war, and issues in an intolerance calculated to destroy rather than stimulate culture. Secondly, the alignment in terms of attitudes towards Moscow in the main lacks indigenous roots. The familiar complaint about isolation can be given too much stress; we might well isolate ourselves more from the influence of political formulae that have only a tenuous relevance to local conditions. Thirdly, in practice this debate is frequently grounded not in a clash of ideas, but in a confusion of ideas: the rank and file of the Communist Party, for example, support the movement out of a sense of resentment against the divergence between the principles and the practices of our society. In other words, they support Communism because they believe that existing social and economic conditions are often unjust; but they fail to understand that in terms of this atheistic doctrine, justice and injustice are meaningless bourgeois clichés. Indeed, one suspects that from the perspective of the Kremlin the non-Russian communist is, more often than not, an 'innocent abroad.' But innocence has its uses!

This lack of a political conservative tradition is intimately connected with the absence of those social classes referred to earlier. In suggesting reasons for the absence in New Zealand of the kind of family tradition of which Eliot speaks, I referred to the social strata from which the New Zealand immigrants came. The absence of a conservative tradition in New Zealand may be said to stem initially from the fact that these strata comprised a narrow cross-section of English society, a cross-section that

excluded both the aristocracy and the upper middle-class; this meant the initial absence of a strong conservative political tradition, and, as noted, subsequent developments have not changed the situation. In terms of Eliot's analysis part of the cost involved must be assessed in terms of the lack of a governing class; because he sees part of the function of the specialized social classes as the shouldering of national, as against local, political responsibilities. Whatever may be thought of the suggestion, the important thing is to see that it is prompted by a very real problem, a problem arising from the failure of the modern democratic State to provide a governing class as competent and disinterested as that which it replaced. The same point has been made by Guido de Ruggiero, a writer who cannot be accused of Eliot's anti-liberal bias.*

> Industrial liberalism [in the words of de Ruggiero] . . . feels the difficulty of creating a governing class. In the most heroic period of its life, the time of Peel and Cobden, it gave its best children to the service of politics; but later, absorption in their own business, and their traditional antipathy to the State, surviving like an inherited characteristic even when the State had passed into their own hands, drew them away from the work of government, which they handed over to their dependents, or tried to effect in underground and indirect ways.†

It may happen, of course, that public servants will unobtrusively fill the role of the governing class which parliament fails to provide: as this happens we stand in need of information about the public servant of the kind which Mr Webb has given us about the parliamentarian.

Eliot's suggestion that responsibility for national politics should rest upon a governing class is open to many objections: but it is worth noting that the proposal is not necessarily as undemocratic as it appears on the surface. As things stand, our politicians do not have to prove their competence by meeting the severe tests

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*Eliot seems to me to repeat in this book a confusion evident in his earlier writings: he identifies the liberal tradition too exclusively with nineteenth century rationalism. Consequently, though Eliot is ostensibly anti-liberal, yet throughout this book he defends an essential liberal principle—the need for *friction*.

†*European Liberalism*, p.46.

which admission to Eliot's social classes would impose: but they do have to meet tests, though we put our trust in a different system of selection, and we use different criteria in making our awards. I wonder how many of those who would object to Eliot's principle of selection could say with precision how it happens that they are represented in the House by the member who in fact represents their constituency? The member received a majority of votes, yes, but why was he chosen to stand, and who precisely chose him? The answer to these questions *might* show that in practice both our mechanisms and criteria of selection are less democratic than Eliot's proposal.

I have said that the lack of a strong conservative political tradition in New Zealand initially stemmed from the fact that the immigrants came from certain social strata; and the lack of a clearly defined religious orthodoxy perhaps stems from the same source, because the immigrants who came were, in the main, nonconformist or low-Church Anglican. The Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, has always had a relatively small following in this country: that, however, does not explain why members of that Church have done so little to implement a political and social policy in keeping with the tradition revived by Leo XIII and Pius XI in their famous social encyclicals. This is unfortunate: think, for example, of the possibilities of political friction that would open up immediately a vigorous minority group promised to act on the principle that ' It is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies.'*

A movement of this kind would not only be in the interests of the Church, but in the interests, too, of its opponents, both secular and religious. In Eliot's phrase, ' One needs the enemy,' though, as he adds, ' the policy of extermination or, as it is barbarously said, liquidating enemies, is one of the most alarming developments of modern war and peace, from the point of view of those who desire the survival of culture.' (p.59). In one sense, and that the most important, it would be foolish to say that the Church lacks the enemy; but in another sense it may perhaps be said that locally the churchman does lack the enemy he needs

Quadragesimo Anno

because he has been too diffident about insisting upon the social and economic implications of Christian doctrine; he has been too timid about insisting that looked at from one point of view, 'culture is religion.' In the interests of New Zealand as a whole a vigorous Catholic Action group would go further than any other single step to remedy the dull utilitarian uniformity of mind and outlook that pervades these islands from the Ninety Mile Beach to Invercargill. A compulsory study of Eliot's book by all who use the word culture might also have some effect. But it is not the kind of book which he who runs may read; and I am conscious that my own reading has been relatively inept, and that the more important implications of the argument for New Zealand remain to be drawn.

Alistair Campbell

Elegy

I.M.

R. M. Dickson, killed in the Alps, 1 *January* 1947, *aged* 20

I

THE HOLLYFORD VALLEY

STORM. Storm in the trees;
Everywhere the hidden sound
Of water, like hives of bees
Up-tilted deep underground.

The shattered cliff's sheer
Face spurts myriads
Of waterfalls, like tears
From some deep-bowed head

Whose colossal grief is stone.
Great trees rooted fast
In ice, nightlong moan
Down the gleaming pass.

II

Now he is dead, who talked
Of wild places and skies
Inhabited by the hawk;

Of the hunted hare that flies
Down bare parapets of stone,
And there closes its eyes;

Of trees rooted fast in stone
Winds bend but cannot break;
Of the low terrible moan

That dead thorn-trees make
On a windy desolate knoll;
Of the storm-blackened lake,

Where heavy breakers roll
Out of the snow-bred mist,
When the glittering air is cold;

Of the Lion Rock that lifts
Out of the whale-backed waves
Its black sky-battering cliffs;

Of the waterfall that raves
Down the dark mountain side,
And into a white cauldron dives.

III

A dead thorn-tree stands
Halfway up a dark mountain;
Goats and sheep sheltered there
From sun and wind; a spring

Wells out of its roots forming
A cool basin, moss-lined
And overflowing. The musterer's
Dog drinks there, or did once.

In these dusty branches
No birds build; but once
A tui lighted there, sang
A few bars, until wind moaned.

The bird fell dead. Now
Nor sheep, nor goat comes near
That spot. But when wind moans,
High over it, the wild birds cry.

IV

Now sleeps the gorge, the pale moon's steaming disk
Desolate and glimmering through the gusty mist;
The storm that through the wind-cropt tussocks
Screams, and screams where the great hawks rest

Upon comfortless stone their arrogant hearts;
Now sleeps the mist whose tumbling woods unroll
Upon gullied hills, and with the dawn depart;
The streaming woods, the pigeon-moaning knoll,

And swarming under cliffs like smoking swords,
The rock-torn Clutha. O this bare place
Embalms such glory, beast nor bird of day
Walks or flies but in its living grace.

V

Sleep on, restless heart,
In the wild fruit-tree;
Be growth and all things sweet
Your love-brimmed reverie.

Sweetness at the root,
May the tree climb high;
Close against the sun
Let all its branches sigh;

Pride and glory lost
When hill-streams are dry:
—O lay to your wild breast
Wind's disconsolate cry.

VI

DRIFTWOOD

In a sun-rinsed rock-pool,
An intensity of weathered wood
Caught and dazzled my eyes.
Water had carved out intricacies

Of violence and wild grace:
A mad girl dancing; men
Wrestling, caught up, twisted
Together like gigantic roots;

And someone fleeing
From what might be death,
So terrible its beauty seemed;
And one, smaller than the rest,

Had so piteous a form
Being warped by sun and wind,
I could not gaze upon it:
It was his form, his face.

VII

WIND AND RAIN

Rain on the roof; darkness of rain
In the orchard, where boughs break,
And crash amid great winds;
And all night I've lain awake

Listening to the storm-wind howl
Upon the hill, and waters race
Beside the house, and could not sleep
Remembering a storm-begotten grace,

And a great gentleness that seemed
More wonderful in one so young;
And all night long I have tried
To still the heart-ache, and give tongue

To his memory, and have failed;
And will fail, as long as the wind
Moans through the trees, and rain
Brings its agony to my mind.

VIII

DEAR head, struck down; bright flesh
That made my black night sweet,
All bruised and bleeding; fond feet
Twisted in death's hideous mesh;

What mountain climbed, what rock,
What dead thorn-tree that drips
With mist, what fall that slips
Into a fiery gorge, but mock

Your memory and my wild tears?
For you, still glimmering hand,
No hand through death's blind land
To guide you, no heart-wrung prayers

For your journeying forth avails
The piteous groping, the drag
Of hesitant feet. What brag
Has death not fulfilled? What fails

But hope, pride, and majesty
Like the sun setting, when head
Moans and slumps back like lead
Amid some wild-bird's ecstasy?

IX

THE LAID-OUT BODY

Now grace, strength and pride
Have flown like the hawk;
The mind like the spring tide,

Beautiful and calm; the talk;
The brilliance of eye and hand;
The feet that no longer walk.

All is new, and all strange,
Terrible as a dusty gorge
Where a great river sang.

Dan Davin

The Quiet One

THE band concert was over and the three of us came out of the Regent into Dee Street with the rest of the crowd.

'I could swear she gave me the eye,' Sid said.

'I'll bet she did,' Wally said. 'One look'd be all she'd need, too. Who did, anyway?'

'That sheila with the black hat on that was in front of us about two seats away. You'd be too busy looking at the statue of the naked Greek dame to notice, I expect. Anyhow she was just in front of me when we were coming out and when I pushed the swing door open for her she turned round and gave me a real grin. Look, there she goes.'

He pointed the way we were going, and, sure enough, we could see a black hat bobbing along a bit in front where the crowd wasn't so thick.

'Come on, boys,' said Wally, 'Here we go.'

'But, look here,' I said, 'I thought we were going to the Greek's.' All the same, I changed my pace to keep up with theirs.

'To hell with the Greek's. Who wants to be sitting down to eggs and chips when there's a chance of picking up a sheila, eh, Sid?'

Sid just grunted. You couldn't see the girl because of the crowd and he was staring straight down the footpath towards where we'd last seen her. You wouldn't have needed to know him as well as I did to guess from the sour way his mouth was closed that he didn't fancy the shape things were taking much. Wally was a tiger for the girls, and a good-looking joker, too. And old Sid hadn't had the same confidence in himself since the dentist made him have all his top teeth out. Wally didn't give him much chance to forget about it, either, calling him Gummy all the evening.

Not that there was anything in it for me, anyway. If there was only one girl I wouldn't be the chap who got her, that was certain. And, as a matter of fact, though I'd have been the last to say so, I'd have been scared stiff if there'd been the least danger of me being the one. I never really knew why I tagged along with them those Sunday evenings. I must have hoped some sort of miracle would happen, I suppose, and that some sheila or other would fall for me and put me into a position where one move had to follow the other in such a way that my mind'd be made up for me. At the same time I was terrified that just that would happen, knowing in advance that at close quarters with a girl I'd be like a cow with a musket. Anyhow, I needn't have worried. Nothing ever did happen and by this time I think I was getting to realize, only I wouldn't admit it, that nothing ever would.

That didn't stop me, though, from putting off going home till the last possible moment in case some sort of miracle turned up and when I finally left Wally or Sid at Rugby Park corner of a Saturday or Sunday night I'd trudge the rest of the way home in the rain or the moonlight, cursing myself and the town and everything in it and wondering what the hell was the matter with me, whether I was a different breed or what, and why it was always me that was left, and thinking that in some other country somewhere things mightn't be like that at all and people would see what I really was instead of what I'd always been.

So, with all that at the back of my mind, and Wally rampaging alongside with about as many afterthoughts as a dog has after

a rabbit, and Sid on the other side getting down in the mouth already at the thought that Wally was going to pinch his girl, I didn't think much of the night's prospects. The upshot'd be that Wally would get her all right and I'd have to spend what was left of the evening at the Greek's trying to cheer Sid up by encouraging him to skite about all the girls that had fallen for him and pretending not to notice how much Wally going off with this one had got under his skin.

Well, after a bit the crowd got thinner and most of them started to cross over to where the last tram was waiting, towards the Majestic side. So we could see better what was in front of us. And there was the girl all right, about twenty yards ahead, all by herself into the bargain, and pacing along at a fair bat. Good legs she had, too.

'I reckon she knows we're following her,' Wally said. 'The trouble is, there's too many of us.'

'That's right, Wally.'

It was very sarcastic the way Sid said it but that didn't worry Wally.

'Go on, Sid,' he said, 'don't be a dog in the manger. A fair fight and let the best man win, eh?'

Of course, that was just the trouble, the way Sid looked at it. It's always the best man who says these things.

Anyhow, before Sid could think of an answer, or before he could think of something that wouldn't have given away he knew he hadn't a hope against Wally whatever kind of fight it was, the girl started to cross the road and so, us too, we changed course like a school of sprats and over the road after her, only about ten yards behind by this time.

She stepped up on to the footpath on the opposite side of the road, us tagging behind like three balloons on a string. She looked behind just then and saw us.

'Now's our chance,' Sid said, getting quite excited and nervous, I could tell.

Wally didn't say anything but he took advantage of his long legs and he was up on the pavement a good yard in front of us.

It was darker on the footpath because of the shop verandahs and because the nearest street-lamp was a good distance away. At first I couldn't see what was happening, owing to the notion I had that if I wore my glasses when we were out on the pick up

on nights like this I'd spoil my chances, such as they were; but I felt both Wally and Sid check. And then I saw what it was. The girl had stepped into a shop doorway and there was a chap there waiting for her.

The girl and her bloke came out of the doorway and walked off towards the other end of Dee Street, her hanging on his arm and talking a blue streak and laughing the way we could tell the joke was on us. And the bloke looked back once as if he'd like to have come at us. But, seeing Wally and thinking he had the trumps anyway, I suppose, he turned round again and kept on going.

'Well, I'm damned,' Wally said.

'Foiled again,' Sid said. But he didn't sound narked at all, really, and I knew by his voice he'd sooner have had it that way so that the laugh was on Wally instead of on himself as it would have been if things had gone differently.

I was pleased, too, for that matter, though I couldn't help envying that bloke a bit with a good-looking girl on his arm and a nice new blue overcoat and Borsalino and never a doubt in his head as to where he was going and what he'd do when he got there.

Still, envying him made it easier to pretend I meant it when I cursed the girl up hill and down dale like the others. For it wouldn't have done for me to show I was really relieved. It was sort of understood that even if I didn't mean business like Wally and Sid I had to go through the motions just the same. They really weren't bad blokes in a way, Wally and Sid, because they knew all the time I wasn't a serious competitor and yet they always treated me as if I was, thinking I'd be hurt if they didn't, I suppose.

And I would have been hurt, too. Somehow, if there hadn't been this kind of agreement about the way we were all to behave, I'd have had to drop the game altogether. I could tell that, because when, as happened sometimes, other blokes joined us who didn't know the rules or didn't care if there were any and they began to pull my leg, I always pushed off after a while. Which was what these other chaps wanted, I expect. 'The Wet Napkin,' I heard one of them, Ginger Foyle it was, say once after I'd gone and he didn't think I could hear him, because I hadn't got my glasses on, perhaps.

No, Wally and Sid weren't like that, especially Wally. They knew I was all right once you got to know me and, besides, I used

to be able to make them laugh when we were by ourselves and get them to see the funny side of things they'd never have noticed if it hadn't been for me.

Well, anyway, there we were left standing in the middle of Dee Street and all cursing our heads off in the same way.

'Nothing for it but to go over to the Greek's,' I said.

'Listen to him, will you, Sid,' Wally said. 'Him and his bloody Greek's. And us all whetted up for a bite of something tastier than old Harry could ever put under our noses.'

I felt a fool immediately, because I might have known that was the wrong thing to say, the way they were feeling. Once Wally had got the idea of skirt into his head it wasn't easy to put him off. And Sid, for all I don't think he really liked Wally, would trail along with him all right, knowing that was his best chance. That was what fascinated him about Wally, he could always have what Wally didn't want. But it was what made him hate Wally's guts, too.

Besides, I suppose they felt I'd sort of broken the rules by not being keen enough and waiting a bit longer before giving up what we all knew was a bad job.

'Well, what'll we do now, Wally?' Sid said.

'Let's take a stroll as far as the Civic and back,' I chipped in, trying to establish myself again. 'You never know, we might pick up something.'

'That's more like it,' Wally said. And then, because he wasn't a bad bloke, a better chap in many ways than Sid would ever be, he added: 'After all, if there's nothing doing, we can always go over to have a feed at the Greek's later on.' Which showed he wasn't really fooled by what I'd said.

So away we went, down past the Majestic where Len Parry and Alec Haynes and all that bunch were as usual, pretending they were talking about who was going to win the Ranfurly Shield when all they were interested in really was the girls who kept scuttling by on their way back from the band concert. I took a look at the Town Clock on the other side as we went by and there it was, half-past ten already, one more Sunday evening just about over and nothing happening, only the same old thing. Already everyone who had anywhere to go was going there and soon the only people left in the streets would be chaps like us who couldn't think of anything better to do and soon we'd be

gone home too and the streets would be empty and another night would be gone out of a man's life and him none the wiser one way or the other.

'Was that your cousin Marty I saw all by himself in the doorway next that bloke who met the sheila, Ned?' Sid suddenly asked.

'I didn't notice.'

'It was him all right, poor bastard,' Wally said.

I pricked up my ears at that. My cousin Marty wasn't the sort of chap you talked about with that particular tone in your voice. He was rather a big shot in the eyes of our crowd. A good five or six years older than any of us, he must have been twenty-two or twenty-three, and he used to earn good money before the slump. A plasterer he was, by trade. But he'd been one of the first to be turned off when things got tough because, though he was good at his job, he had a terrible temper and was too handy with his fists. A big joker, he was, with reach and height, and they used to say that if only he'd do a bit more training there wasn't a pro in the business he couldn't have put on his back for the count. As it was he'd made quite a name for himself round the town as a fighter and once when I was at the barber's and got fed up with the way slick little Basset kept taking me for granted because I didn't know what was going to win the Gore Cup I'd managed to get in casually that Marty was my cousin and after that Basset could never do enough for me.

'What do you mean, "poor bastard"?' Sid was saying.

'Didn't you hear? The trouble with you, Sid, is you never hear anything now you've got your teeth out.'

'Come on, come on, know-all. What's it all about?'

'Yes, what was it, Wally?' I asked; for I could tell Wally was wishing he'd kept his mouth shut, knowing Marty was my cousin.

'Well, it's only what they're saying, Ned, and there mightn't be anything in it, though I have noticed Marty hasn't been about much lately. You know how you'd always see him and Dulcie Moore round together of a Saturday and Sunday night?'

'That's right,' Sid said, glad to get in on the inside again. 'I saw them coming out of the Rose Gardens about two in the morning the night of Ginger Foyle's keg-party and they were always at the Waikiwi dances together.'

'Well, they say he put her up the spout. And then he got some old dame who hangs out in Georgetown to fix her up. Of course, that's happening all the time all over the place, you know, and nobody ever thinks a thing about it as long as no one gets caught.' This was for me. 'But the trouble this time was that something went wrong and she got blood-poisoning or something, and now she's in hospital and they say the johns have been at her all the time beside her bed trying to find out who did it and who was the man. But so far she won't say and the odds are she won't pull through.'

'Jesus,' said Sid. 'I thought he looked a bit down in the mouth.'

'Wouldn't you be?'

'But, look here, Wally,' I said, 'Who told you all this?'

'I heard Marty's crowd, Jim Fergus and all that lot, talking about it yesterday after the game. And when I was shaving in the bathroom this morning and they didn't know I was there, I heard Mum telling the old man about it. It was her that told that bit about her not being expected to live.'

We'd got as far as the Civic and turned back by this time and the crowd was getting very thin by now, everybody making for home, feeling much the way I'd been feeling, I expect, that they might as well be in bed as hanging round. Only I didn't feel like that any more. Things happened, sure enough, and even to people you knew, even to your own family, near enough.

Sid and Wally kept talking about it all the way back up Tay Street. It was queer the way they seemed to get a sort of pleasure out of discussing it. And what was queerer still was that I liked hearing them talk about it. It must have been partly how old we were and partly the town we lived in. You felt the place wasn't quite such a dead-alive hole, after all, and you felt you really were grown up when things like that, terrible things but things all the same, happened to people you even knew.

Anyhow, just as we got to the Bank corner, two girls came round it the opposite way and we almost banged into them. While we were dodging around them to let them pass and show what gentlemen we were they cut through between me and Wally and we could hear them giggling as they went on.

'Sorry,' Wally called back in an extra-polite voice I hardly recognized, he could put on the gyver so well when he wanted to.

'Don't mention it,' one of the girls said and giggled again.

We stopped at that and Sid made a great show of lighting cigarettes for us while we all had a good dekko back to see what the girls were up to.

'They've stopped in the doorway next the jewellers,' Wally said. 'Come on, Sid, here we go. We're home and dry.' He was so excited he forgot to pretend I was in on it, too.

The two of them cut back the way we'd come, like a couple of whippets at first and then as they got closer with a sort of elaborate stroll as if they might just as well be walking that way as any other. I followed after them, trying to catch up and yet not to catch up. I knew I ought to have gone away. There was no good just tagging on, being a nuisance. But I kept following, all the same.

'Hullo,' Wally was saying as I came up to the doorway. 'Going anywhere?'

'What's that got to do with you?' the girl who had called back to us said.

'Well,' Sid said, 'it's getting late for girls to be out by themselves with all the roughs there are about this time of night and we thought you might like to have an escort on the way home.'

Sid could always talk well when it came to the pinch, especially if he had Wally with him. I of course couldn't say a thing, being as nervous as a cat, although I knew already that it didn't matter much what I did, me being only the spare part.

'You know what thought did,' the girl said.

'Come on, Isobel,' the other girl said. 'It's getting late.'

'Will you have a cigarette, Isobel?' Wally said. And he took out his case. It was the one he kept his tailor-mades in, not the one he used for home-rolled ones and butts. In that light you'd have taken it for silver.

'Don't mind if I do.'

'Come on, Isobel,' the other girl said again.

'Now, Jean, don't be an old fusspot. There's heaps of time really. Why don't you have a cigarette, too.'

'That's right,' Wally said, and so Jean took one from the case, a bit nervously, I thought.

'We don't even know your names, do we, Jean?' said Isobel when Sid had flourished his lighter for them. You could see them trying to get a look at us while the flame was there. But of course we had our backs to the street-lights and they couldn't have made out much what we looked like.

'That's easy,' Wally said then. 'I'll introduce us. My name's Wally Radford and this is my friend Sid, Sid Cable. And this is Ned.'

'He's a quiet one, isn't he?' Isobel gave Jean a nudge and giggled at me.

I tried to think of something very witty to say, the sort of thing that would have come to Wally or Sid in a flash. But I couldn't think of anything at all and I could feel myself blushing. I hated that Isobel then. It was always the goodlooking ones that made me feel most of a fool. The other one, Jean, I didn't mind so much because I could tell by her way of giggling that she was nervous, too. She wasn't anything like such a goodlooker, though.

There was a bit of a silence then. They were all waiting for me to say something. When I still didn't say anything I felt them all just give me up. Wally got into the doorway close to Isobel and tried to get his arm round her. She kept fending him off and looking at him and then at Jean in a way that said as plain as a pikestaff: Wait till afterwards when we can get away by ourselves.

Sid was talking a blue streak to Jean so as to give her a chance to get over her shyness, I suppose, and to shut me out of it and make me see I was being the gooseberry, in case I didn't see it already.

There was nothing to do but leave them to it. I was only holding Wally and Sid back from doing their stuff, hanging round like that.

'Well, I must be getting along,' I said.

'Why don't you come with us?' Jean said. Her voice sounded quite scared. But I could tell Sid wasn't going to get anywhere with her and I wasn't going to have her use me as an excuse to keep him off and then have him putting the blame on me next day.

'I'd like to,' I said, 'but I live up the other end of the town.'

'OK, Ned, good night,' Wally said in an offhand sort of way and Sid said good night too, in the friendly voice he always used when you were doing something he wanted you to do. That was one of the things Sid liked about me, that I always did the expected thing. It wasn't one of the things I liked about him.

So I set off by myself up towards the Bank corner again, feeling like a motherless foal, as the old man would have said. I thought I'd better give them plenty of time to get clear and so I decided I'd walk a few blocks up Dee Street and back again.

The town clock was pointing to nearly eleven by now. All the crowd that'd been in front of the Majestic was gone and Dee Street was as empty as the tomb except for a bobby standing in the library doorway over the other side, just in case there should be a row at the Greek's, I expect.

Seeing the Greek's lighted windows gave me the idea of going in for a feed, after all. But it was pretty late and I couldn't face going in there all by myself, with the blokes eyeing me and guessing what had happened. So I crossed Esk Street and went straight on up.

But it wasn't nearly so bad being by yourself when the whole street was empty like that and you didn't have to wonder what people were thinking about you. I quite liked striding along under the shop verandahs as if I were going nowhere in a hurry and listening to my heels hammer on the asphalt and seeing my reflection pass dark on the windows. It was better feeling miserable by yourself and not having to put up a show any more. Or else the kind of show you put up when there was no one but yourself to watch was more convincing.

'Hullo, Ned.'

I stopped in my tracks and looked round to see where the voice came from. Then I saw him. He was in the same doorway that the sheila had met her bloke in earlier on. He was standing there, all stiff like a sentry, and in that light you'd have thought his eyes were black they were so dark. A Spaniard, he might have been, with the long sideboards halfway down his cheeks and his straight, thin nose, that had never been broken for all the boxing he'd done.

'Hullo, Marty,' I said.

He didn't say any more, just went on looking at me. I didn't know quite what to do because it struck me it was probably only the suddenness of seeing someone he knew that had made him call out and probably he wished he hadn't now. Besides, knowing what I did, I felt uncomfortable.

I went up to him all the same, not knowing how to get away without it looking awkward and as if I'd heard about his trouble and was dodging off so as not to be seen with him.

'Have a cigarette,' I said and I produced a packet of ten Capstan.

'Thanks.'

I lit them for us both and when that was over there I was still stuck and unable to think of anything else to say. The only things that came into my head sounded quite hopeless compared with the things he must have on his mind.

'All the crowd gone home?' I said in the end, for lack of anything better.

'Suppose so,' he answered and took a puff of the cigarette. Then he added in a voice so savage that it gave me a real fright. 'Who the hell cares what they've done? Pack of bastards.'

I didn't say anything. I was trying to work out what he meant by that. Had they done the dirty on him and talked to the johns? Or was he just fed up with them?

He gave me a look just then, the first time he'd really looked at me since I stopped.

'You've heard all about it, I suppose?'

That stumped me properly. I didn't want him to get the idea the whole town was talking about him. Especially as that was what they were probably doing. I was scared of him, too. He'd be a bad bloke to say the wrong thing to.

'Heard about what?'

'You know.' He'd guessed by the time I took to answer. 'About Dulcie.'

There was no good pretending. 'Yes,' I said. 'How is she?'

He didn't answer but he kept on looking at me in the same queer way that he had been looking at me before. And then, as if he'd been sizing me up, he got down to what was on his mind.

'Look here, Ned,' he said. 'What about doing something for me?'

'All right,' I said. 'What do you want me to do?' My heart was in my boots because I didn't know much about the law but I felt sure this was going to be something against it.

'It's like this. I can't ring the hospital to see how she is because the johns are there and they keep asking me my name and they know my voice, too. What about you ringing for me?'

'All right, Marty,' I said. 'But what'll I say if they ask who I am? If I give my name they might come poking about home trying to find out what I know about it.'

'Say your name's Eddie Sharp. That's a friend of her young brother's and it'd be quite natural for him to ring. Will you do it?'

'I'll just see if I've got any pennies.'

We walked back towards the Post Office square. But the john was still in the library doorway and so I told Marty to go back to the place where I'd met him and wait for me there.

The john gave me that hard look that policemen give you but I went straight past him without giving a sign of how nervous I was. It was being so sorry for Marty that made me able to do it, I think.

'Southland Hospital,' a woman's voice answered when I'd got the number.

'I want to inquire about a patient, Miss Moore, Miss Dulcie Moore.'

'Will you hold on, please?'

There was a lot of clicking at the other end and I could hear whispering. Then a man's voice answered.

'The patient died an hour ago. Who is that speaking.'

I didn't answer. I just rang off and came out of the phone box.

How was I going to tell him, I kept asking myself as I went back past the john, hardly noticing him this time.

Marty was standing in the doorway, just as he had been the first time.

'How was she?'

There was nothing else I could do. I out with it.

'She died an hour ago.'

He stood there without saying a thing, just looking at me and yet not seeing me. Then he took a deep breath and his chest came out and he stood even straighter.

'So that's how it is,' he said. 'She's dead.'

I didn't say anything. I just stood there, wishing I was anywhere else in the world.

'If only I'd known,' he said. 'Christ, man, I'd have married her a hundred times, kid and all.'

He stopped. His mind must have been going over and over this ground for days.

He gave a laugh suddenly, such a queer, savage sort of a laugh that I jumped.

'If it'd been twins, even,' he said.

I had enough sense not to think that I was meant to laugh at that one.

'And those bloody johns sitting by the bed.'

'Did she come to?' I asked.

'Yes, she was conscious a lot of the time. But she wouldn't talk, not Dulcie. Not her. She was all right, Dulcie.'

Then there was silence again. I didn't know what to do or say. It was getting late. They'd have locked the door at home and there'd be a rumpus if they knew what time it was when I came in. How queer it was: here I was in the middle of something that really mattered and worrying about what my mother would say if she heard me climbing in the window.

All the same I wanted to get home. And then I had to admit to myself it wasn't really that. It was that I wanted to get away from Marty. I think it must have been the first time I was ever with someone who felt as badly as he was feeling.

'I remember her,' I said. 'She was a stunner to look at.'

'Wasn't she?' Marty said. And the way he said it made the tears come into my eyes.

'Why don't you walk my way?' I asked him. If he did that I could be making towards home and at the same time wouldn't feel I was ratting on him.

'No, I'm not going home yet,' he said.

I shuffled from one foot to the other, wondering what to do next and a bit worried what he would do after I'd gone.

'We always used to meet here,' he said. 'In this doorway.'

'Oh,' I said. 'Well, look here, Marty, I've got to be getting home now.'

'That's all right.'

I tried to think of some way of saying how sorry I was. But there was no way of saying it.

'Good night, Ned,' he said, and then, as I began to walk away, he called out: 'Thanks for doing that for me.'

So that's how it is, I was saying to myself all the way home. That's the sort of thing that happens once the gloves are off. And by the time I'd got to the front gate and opened it with my hand on the latch to stop it clicking and sat on the front verandah to take my shoes off I think I'd taken it all into myself and begun to wake up to how we only kid ourselves we can tell the good things from the bad things when really they're so mixed up that half the time we're thinking one thing, feeling another, and doing something else altogether.

Hubert Witheford

Two Poems

THE AUTUMN HAS ITS FLOWERS

FALL, fall, O leaves of light,
O bright and fragile days,
Decline upon the air
Of autumn and our lives.

Quenched are the fires of your birth
When earth, an anvil to the sun,
Beneath the hammer-blows of light,
Your subtle strength sustained.

Another star is come,
Another power is fled,
A moon of darkness draws
The tide within your veins.

Under a cloudless sky
Comes from far frozen seas
The breath of severance
The small dawn-wind of death.

EARTH AND SKY

FROM elemental strife within
Come the contending images.

Opposing powers in the word
The cosmos of illusion spin.

In every sign, in every sound
The ancient adversaries contend.

Between those opposites
The world's swift line extends.

On the unconquerable flux
Is traced the destined line

Where all day long until the night
The chiselled waves meet flowing shores.

All day long towards the sun
The structure of the plant is drawn,

The fragile vase lifts to the sun
The seed of chaos ripening.

From polar stress of earth and sky
The sequence of our days proceed.

W. Hart-Smith

Two Poems

TELEPHONE TO A FARM

ENJOINED upon me to listen
here in this house to a wire that comes
looping out of the valley
to a ti-tree pole on a gable end that hums
and grows and grows to set the whole house
humming
only to slowly die away
to silence. If I lived in this house alone
what wouldn't I make this singing mean!

Enjoined upon me to listen to the voice
of this one long wire, more so I believe
than to the chorus of many hung in a stave
high above the roadside gorse.
This one long wire strung
from leaning pole to leaning pole
is a divergence
leaving at a sharp angle the main music
a cul de sac of song in thin wood-wind
going off alone into solitariness
and not coming back.

SUBJECT MATTER

No, I think a footsore sheep dog
obeying the weary whistle with a limp
or a close-up of gorse
lit with headlamps
leaning out all dusty at night
toward a brother thorn across the road;
or a stand of pine
lopped for firewood; yes, and a
solitary cabbage tree with its head blown off
a scraggy ruff of dead leaves
rattling at its neck. Not
these great chunks of landscape, Mount
Cooks fourteen guineas, rain on the
hills, south of this
and north of that. Please,
paint me a pub winder
with the din behind it.

S. B. Maclennan

A Note on Mervyn Taylor's Work

If a book is not worth illustrating it is not worth reading. The book is just a development of early picture writing. The pictures eventually became abstract symbols but the illustration came back to supplement and adorn the text. If you drive the illustration from the text it bursts forth on the cover or book jacket. There is always work for the illustrator.

And yet good illustrators are rare and illustrator-engravers rarer still. The illustrator who designs and engraves his own block is fortunate in that every imprint whether made by hand or by machine retains much of his personality. A great deal can be lost when a mechanical process is necessary between the artist's own work and the preparation of the printing block or plate. Every artist guards jealously his individuality and the wise publisher knows that this intangible quality is an important element in book illustration.

The honest illustrator admits that most books must have text as well as illustration and even that the author's personality must generally be the dominating one. But if the artist were therefore to completely submerge his own personality his contribution to the book would be lifeless and, therefore, worthless. It becomes, in fact, a matter of co-operation between author and artist in consultation with the sympathetic publisher. That the problem can be solved with complete success has been shown in the cases of Dickens and Cruickshank, Carrol and Tenniel, Milne and Sheppard and Butler and Hogarth, although Hogarth, like Lear, was happier when he composed both theme and illustration.

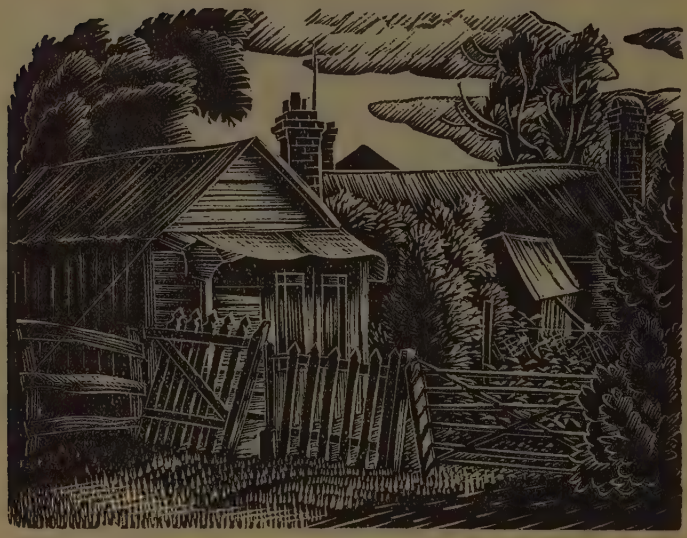
Bewick is the father of modern illustration on the wood. He established wood engraving as the ideal medium for book illustrations. There is an affinity between the precise cut of the graver and the clear cut form of printed type, and the block can be locked up and printed with the text in the same machine and on the same paper. But Bewick did not herald an era of great wood

Huias. 1949

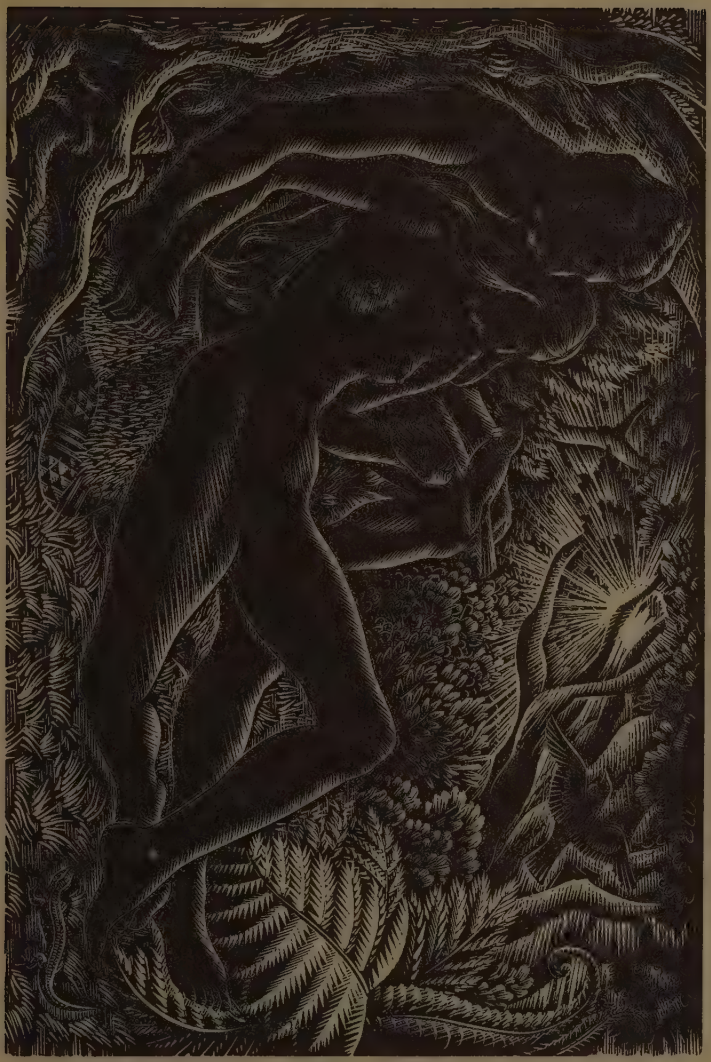
Angel Fish. 1947

From *Shadow of the Flame.* 1947

New Zealand Orchid. 1946



The First Pelorus Press, Epsom, Auckland. 1946



Idyll. 1949

engraving. The wood proved too versatile a medium and extreme skill soon overshadowed artistry. Professional engravers learned to make a wood engraving look like anything but an engraving on wood. Photo-mechanical methods of reproduction superseded the wood block. For general purposes wood engraving proved too slow and too costly to compete economically. But artist-engravers rediscovered the wood. John Farleigh's illustrations to Shaw's *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God* demonstrated that the wood need not be reserved for only the precious among modern works but that stereos from the original blocks retain almost the whole character of the originals and make possible large and inexpensive editions.

In New Zealand Mervyn Taylor has taken up the graver and shown that wood engravings printed directly from the block present an admirable medium for the illustration of books produced for the New Zealand market. His first book was a collection of his engravings printed without text by The Caxton Press. The edition was sold out very quickly, for the work of Mervyn Taylor possesses that attractiveness that tempts and even creates the collector. This venture showed that any book illustrated with his engravings would have a decidedly increased appeal. All he now needed was a book to work on to prove it.

Taina was the book.* Written by G. M. Henderson, it is a story of life among the Maoris of a century ago. It gave Mr Taylor a fine opportunity to exploit the possibilities of translating on to the wood the decorative wealth of Maori carving and dress. It also called for the human figure and in addition a careful study of Polynesian characteristics. It demanded, too, careful co-operation between the editor, Mrs Mountjoy, and the artist. Without perfect understanding there could be no hope of the harmonious solution that is essential to success. Each illustration was fully discussed and numerous sketches tried out before the final drawing was made and the block engraved.

This interest in Maori art and legend was no passing interest, for Mervyn Taylor has for years been a keen student. The contract to make a series of six engravings for the I.C.I. 1949 Calendar illustrating Maori legend presented an opportunity for further research and the result has been a notable success.

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* *Taina.* G. M. Henderson. H. H. Tombs Ltd. 17s. 6d.

The first project in illustrating a book with wood engravings started before either of these other two ventures. Perhaps by the time these notes appear a slim volume of poems *Shadow of the Flame* by Hubert Witheford will have arrived from the Pelorus Press. It will contain seven wood engravings by Mervyn Taylor. They are a result of an understanding between author and illustrator comparable with the Shaw-Farleigh *Black Girl* collaboration. No effort was spared on the part of the artist to ensure that he should capture the spirit of the poem in each engraving. The result shows that this has been a stimulating experience, for the engravings, while being visual interpretations of the poems, are entirely personal and spontaneous pieces of art.

I have written of Mervyn Taylor as an engraver-illustrator. All his wood engravings are not illustrations, nor are all his works engravings. He is a versatile artist, modest and sincere, one who demands of himself an exacting standard. His capacity for strenuous and sustained effort make it certain that we may expect still greater things in the future.

Lawrence Robinson

Incident concerning Serge

PETE and Nicholas were with Serge in the Bar the day before they had to go back. There had been heavy trucks going through the village all night; sleep had been difficult because of the trucks and the heat.

Now they were drinking beer and talking about the leave because it would soon be over.

'She's going to wait for me,' Serge said. His tunic was undone and he had bluish shadows on his face even after shaving; his face had always a shiny, polished look.

'They never wait,' Pete said.

'This one will,' Serge said.

He turned half around and called for more beer.

Nicholas wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

'They're all the same, these bitches,' he said, 'they tell you they'll wait, and the first time, you might believe them. They all forget to wait.'

'No, it's not like that,' Serge repeated. His small eyes went to either of them at the bar and his face was shinier when he turned it a little. He was very serious about it. 'She said she would wait and she will.'

'How do you know that?' Nicholas asked him.

'I don't know it; it's just a feeling I have.'

'They do everything but wait,' Pete said, 'I know that's right.'

'Yes, that's right,' Nicholas said.

'You haven't got it right,' Serge said. 'The trouble with you is you've never met a good woman. You don't know the difference between a good woman and a camp-follower.'

'And you know, eh, O Captain?'

'I told you,' Serge said, 'I have the feeling that this one is all right.'

Nicholas belched. 'Nuts,' he said. 'I've seen them going along the street after the uniforms; their clean dresses and their high-heeled shoes and the paint on their faces. It's only the uniforms.'

'You've never been with them,' Serge said. There was a little smile on his lips now.

'Yes, I've been with them. I didn't say that. I've been with them often but I don't believe any of them.'

Pete said something obscene.

'You've got a foul mouth,' Nicholas said, 'a very foul mouth. You drink too much, talk too much and know too many women.'

'All those things because I have a uniform on. It's a charm, eh? I go about in slacks and a shirt and the woman I had the night before doesn't see me.'

'It's right,' Nicholas said. 'He's right, you know.'

'He's touched,' Serge said. He finished his beer and put another coin on the bar.

'Three again,' he said to the barman. He turned back again. 'Too much talk,' he said, 'too much damn' talk and not enough drinking.'

'I agree with that,' Nicholas said, 'you're better about drinking than about women.'

They were two hours out along the winding yellow road and Pete and Serge were in the back of the last truck. They were sprawled out on the shuddering, lunging metal deck with the camouflaged canopy above them. The air was thickly hot in there and they were both a little drunk with the beer and with the heat afterwards.

'Damn all little wars,' Serge said, 'why don't we let them fight their own little wars!'

'Why don't we,' Pete said. He was looking heavy-lidded across the bouncing floor at Serge. 'I wonder who's kissing her now?'

'Oh shut your damn' mouth,' Serge said. He felt tired and hot.

Pete laughed then.

'I wonder who's teaching her how? You know, I'll bet she's a colonel's wife, eh?'

'When I get back she'll be a captain's wife,' Serge said. 'That wouldn't be too bad. If I were a woman I should be proud to be the wife of a gallant captain. People stare in the restaurants.'

'And you in civvies,' Pete said.

'Civvies be damned,' Serge said. 'I look like an undertaker in civvies.'

'Perhaps you should try at being an undertaker,' Pete said.

Serge yawned loudly. He closed his eyes.

The truck shuddered along in the heat and they both felt sleepy and a little dizzy. Pete thought that getting drunk was not such a good idea now. He thought that Serge was being a fool over this woman.

'What's she like?' he said.

Serge's eyes opened again slowly.

'A good woman,' he said, 'a very good woman, this one. She's not beautiful. Beautiful women don't like me. This one likes me.'

'And she'll wait for you,' Pete said. 'You're a damn' fool.'

'All right,' Serge said.

'And the laugh will be on the dashing young artillery captain,' Pete said. 'A good woman. You should have told her where to go. They're all camp followers.'

'All right,' Serge said. He was too sleepy to argue with Pete. He closed his eyes again; the truck jolted on and the road wound slowly out behind like a twisted yellow ribbon.

Much later, they were still moving, and the intense heat had made the back of the truck very uncomfortable. Pete's mouth was dry; he wished that they were back at the village.

Serge had awakened with a headache, and for many minutes he had been watching the fields sliding out behind.

'Somebody's bound to snipe at us soon,' he said.

'No, not yet,' Pete said, 'later on maybe. We're not into the hills yet.'

'You'll see,' Serge said.

'I don't think we're far enough up,' Pete said. 'Hell, it'll be hot with the guns this weather, eh?'

'Yes,' said Serge, 'it'll scorch your hands and burn your eyes out, this heat. It's the distance that hurts your eyes. I can't stand the glare in the afternoons.'

'It's a damn' fool of a war, anyway,' Pete said.

'We should both go into the undertaking business,' Serge said, 'it should be booming now.'

They both laughed.

'Nicholas could lay them out, eh?' Pete said. 'Nicholas would be good at laying people out.'

'He always was,' Serge said. He jerked his thumb in the direction in which they were travelling. 'I wonder what they'll be doing up there?'

'They'll be digging gun-pits,' Pete said, 'they're always doing that. All wars are made up of people digging gun-pits. When they've finished one lot they begin again and it goes on like that until the war is over.'

'Yes,' Serge said, 'yes, that's right.' He felt very stiff from the hours in the moving truck.

The barrage did not last long and the attack was never called a success.

Pete was beginning to think that he had backed the wrong side. It happened like that sometimes.

He came around the end of the tents with his hands swinging loose and with a great deal of dust sticking to the sweat on his face.

'So there you are,' Nicholas said.

'It's bloody hot,' Pete said. He pushed his hand across his forehead slowly. 'All over but the burying. I've been looking for Serge.'

'You won't find him,' Nicholas said. 'He's dead.'

'No!'

Nicholas nodded.

'Poor damned Serge,' Pete said, 'where have they got him?'

Nicholas nodded towards a long, low tent behind Pete.

'In there,' he said, 'it's full of them in there.'

'Where did he get it?'

'In the chest,' Nicholas said, 'when the planes came. Didn't have time to drop before they were over the hill and down on us.'

'Poor damned Serge.'

'You want to have a look at him?' Nicholas asked.

'No,' Pete said. He was very sorry that it had happened to Serge.

Months afterwards, they went back to the village and the war was over this time. They went back on the same trucks and there was a great crowd on the streets as they drove in.

Pete jumped down and then Nicholas.

'I want a drink,' Pete said.

'You always want a drink,' Nicholas said.

They went into the same Bar and had to work slowly forward through the jostling mass of uniforms. Nicholas gave up halfway.

'You get them,' he said, 'you are the one that's thirsty.'

Presently, Pete came struggling back through the noisy crowd, slopping the beer and cursing.

'Here you are!'

'Thanks,' Nicholas said, 'for everything.'

Some girls went by the Bar, laughing and calling out to the soldiers. Two or three left the Bar to speak to the girls.

Pete was looking at Nicholas.

'I wish I'd got her name,' he said.

'Whose name?'

'Serge's woman.'

'We agreed that she wouldn't wait,' Nicholas said, 'they never do.'

'No,' Pete said, 'but I wish I'd got her name, I mean, just in case.'

Nicholas finished his beer and breathed loudly after it and belched.

'Nuts,' he said, 'the camp followers are all alike. She's probably living with a major.'

'Yes,' Pete said, 'I suppose that's right.'

Then Pete noticed that Nicholas was looking past him and grinning at someone standing there. He half turned and saw a woman just inside the doorway and Nicholas seemed to have caught her attention.

'Listen,' Nicholas said softly.

'Drink?' he asked the woman.

'No.' She shook her head.

Nicholas whispered again.

'So very hard to get, these ones.'

'Come on,' he said to her.

'I told you. No,' the woman said.

'In love with a major,' Nicholas said with mock disappointment.

The woman's eyes were glistening and full and she was looking around the Bar.

Nicholas laughed.

'A gallant, gallant major!'

'Or a captain,' Pete said. He was not laughing with Nicholas.

The woman looked down quickly at Pete.

'Sit down,' Pete said.

'No,' she said. 'You startled me for a moment. It's of no interest to you.'

'Sit down,' Pete said again. 'A captain with a dark face. A short captain with a dark shiny face.'

The woman stepped to the table slowly and sank down in a chair, staring hard at Pete.

'Brandy?' Nicholas asked.

She turned her face towards him slowly as though she had not quite caught the question.

'Brandy,' Nicholas said to himself and got up with the two empty beer glasses and shoved away into the crowd.

The woman was leaning forward, looking at Pete and waiting.

Pete took out a cigarette and was lighting it and squinting

through the smoke at Nicholas' back going through the Bar crowd. He was thinking about the woman opposite and wondering what kind of questions women asked at a time like this and wondering how he was going to begin it.

Robert Chapman and Keith Sinclair

Marx and The Corn King

As to the realms of ideology which soar still higher in the air, religion, philosophy, etc., these have a prehistoric stock, found already in existence and taken over in the historic period, of what we should today call bunk.

Engels to Conrad Schmidt. 27.10.1890

THE SEARCH FOR THE DIALECTIC

PERHAPS the most amazing escapes from the calculating irreligion of the nineteenth century were accomplished by Hegel and his pupil Marx. In a century which had substituted overstuffed complacency for fanatic certainties they rode off back to back on an intellectual device which, if appropriately fed with raw fact and adjusted by one of the elect, they were assured would carry them to the empyrean of absolute judgments on history and historical values. In the course of the nineteenth century the expansion of research and of Europe greatly increased and complicated available knowledge. This rendered the philosophical search for unitary explanations embracing all fields of knowledge into an amusement at about the same level as alchemy. But before this process was able thus to raise for our hero the question 'is your journey really necessary?' he was off on the dialectic. It is this contrivance, the dialectic, that we intend to examine. If we do so without undue solemnity it is because our serious study of it has not suggested that it is always worthy of too grave a measure.

In most histories of political thought a pleasantly substantial concept emerges on the subject of the dialectic. Briefly, all processes are supposed to conform to a simple pattern. First comes the thesis, the original statement or arrangement (of facts or of elements in a situation), then follows the antithesis, the

contrary or, as is sometimes said, the opposite statement or arrangement. Arising out of this succession of thesis and antithesis comes a synthesis having the superior elements of the preceding forms ordered so as to form a superior statement or arrangement. This last phase is known as the negation of the negation, and the negation having been negated by the arrival at a synthesis, this synthesis can in turn serve as a thesis for the next movement. Down this channel we are instructed all developments were believed by the dialecticians to move, whether it was the shape of the tennis racquet or the class structure of Afghanistan that was being evolved. One is led to presume that if one looked it up in Marx and Engels there it would be, an imposing definition probably, followed by exposition, amplification and demonstration.

But it is not so. The solid concept sketched by the historian of political thought breaks up on reference to the works of Marx and Engels. The solidity melts into translators' footnotes, editors' prefaces, and into indexes that refer to such 'illustrations' as a discussion of the development of the form of value. Throughout the *Marx and Engels, Selected Correspondence* put out under the imprimatur of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, references to the prime mover can be had in every connection from 'dialectics in agitation' to 'dialectics in war.' They remain, however, essentially references, assertions that this or that process is dialectical, that Kugelmann or Fourier lack the dialectic and so on. Engels left us both *Anti-Dühring* and the *Dialectics of Nature* to demonstrate 'that the laws of dialectic are real laws of natural development and therefore apply also to the theoretical study of natural science.' But where, since Marx's standpoint was that 'of human society or social humanity,' does one look for the detailed examination of human society as a carefully defined series of dialectical developments? The answer, we submit, is nowhere. Although given solidity by the earnest patchworks of quotation and gratuitous examples supplied by the commentators, Marx's dialectical examination of history is a myth in a further sense than that we shall presently indicate.

What we do find in the works of Marx and Engels is fascinating original historical analysis. By illumining the necessity of a close study of the sources and processes of social change, and by emphasizing, indeed virtually introducing, economic causation into history, Marx earned himself the title of one of the great historians.

All historians today could be said to be Marxists in a sense in which they are certainly not all Actonites or Micheletists. But we are not here concerned with these great contributions but with the vitiating mystique which was associated with them.

On the French revolutions of 1848 and 1870-1, in *Capital*, in the section ' The Real Basis of Ideology ' in *The German Ideology*, in the *Communist Manifesto* and in correspondence, the two, as historians, review dozens of historical situations. They have to hand all the illustrations one could wish to see worked into the formula. But they refrain. Indeed they seem almost to conceive of dialectical demonstration and historical demonstration as separate, as for example in Engels's letter to Marx on the subject of the proofsheets of *Capital* dealing with the form of value. For ' philistine ' consumption Engels suggested that ' at most the points here established dialectically might be demonstrated historically at rather greater length, the test to be made from history so to speak, although what is most necessary in this respect has already been said.' In their treatment of history the philistine might likewise well ask for an additional, a dialectical demonstration. It is similarly indicative that Marx, writing to Engels in 1858, should point out that ' the transition of landed property to wage labour is not only dialectical but historical.' The history and the dialectic are not merged, which is a signpost to the conclusion that they are in fact intrinsically separate.

For what is demonstrated again and again is the existence of contradictions, contrarieties, oppositions, tensions and paradoxes in these historical situations. One can only take it that any of these various relationships implied for Marx and Engels by its very existence an accompanying thesis and antithesis. In other words, any relation from tension to contradiction between two elements in history sufficed to define those elements as thesis and antithesis respectively. By implication (and it is almost without exception left to implication) whatever emerges in relation to these two elements after any desired length of time is a synthesis. We have come a long way already from the dialectic as a concrete formula for all change. The image has so blurred, the labels become so general, that what Marx and Engels are really proving is that difference and opposition are native to change and that all human solutions are insufficient. Analysed this way it may, indeed does, seem somewhat platitudinous.

The practical application of the dialectic to historical materialism was so loose, in fact, as to constitute a mere philosophical camouflage for a study of multifarious interconnected causes and effects, as its salesmen appear almost to have recognized. The position was nicely revealed in an Engels letter where he stated 'the modern scientific doctrine of the correlation of natural forces is after all only another expression, or rather it is the positive proof of the Hegelian development of cause, effect, interaction, force, etc.' The values of the dialectic in practice resided entirely in what had been 'developed.'

Only too often the new development itself consisted of a series of illogical verbalisms. Engels, who was engaged in introducing Conrad Schmidt to dialectical thought, exposed more than he meant when he wrote of a contemporary critic of Hegel: 'to imagine he is criticizing Hegel because here and there he gets on the track of one of the false connections by means of which Hegel, like every other systematizer, has to get his system neatly constructed!' Yes, to imagine! 'The colossal discovery that Hegel sometimes lumps contrary and contradictory oppositions together! I could show him some more tricks very different from that if it was worth the trouble.' He did; in many instances of ignoring facts to assume the formula. When Engels wrote again to Conrad Schmidt he might well have been illustrating his own intellectual attitudes.

'You ought on no account to read Hegel as Herr Barth has done, namely in order to discover the bad syllogisms and rotten dodges which served him as levers in construction. That is pure schoolboys' work. It is much more important to discover the truth and the genius which lie beneath the false form and within the artificial connections. Thus the transitions from one category or from one contradiction to the next are nearly always arbitrary —often made through a pun, as when Positive and Negative (Par. 120) *zugrunde gehen* [perish] in order that Hegel may arrive at the category of *Grund* [reason, ground]. To ponder over this much is waste of time.' It is indeed and it was a wise schoolboy who refused to take false proof for great truth.

Marx and Engels's real historical knowledge was their knowledge of contemporary capitalism. The most frequent conjunction of dialectics and social development is found in their references to it. There they had found a real series of paradoxes. They saw enlarging productive forces and periodically contracting consump-

tion, a capitalist society identified with the bourgeoisie and private appropriation producing of necessity within itself a social and centralized means of production associated with the proletariat. This confirmed their belief in a 'dialectical process.' *Laisser-faire* capitalism had indeed set a term to its own existence. When they extended the dialectic beyond their own firm research they were on shakier ground. For instance one example frequently used by them of historical dialectics was the collapse of feudalism. They asserted that 'the feudal middle ages (also) developed in its womb' the class which was to destroy it, in this case 'the feudal relations of property' being 'incompatible with the developing productive forces.' But what does this amount to? No contradictory elements in feudalism are given as the thesis and antithesis which bore fruit in these new productive forces. This corresponds with the facts, but not with the dialectic. The new money economy which superseded the feudal economy grew alongside it and had in fact had a tenuous existence since the collapse of classical civilization. It was not generated within mediaeval society, which had a subsistence economy built of self-contained units with an appropriate 'superstructure.'

Further afield they were even vaguer, ignoring whole civilizations, in which the role of the means of production presumably could have been tested, until in the basic problem of the origin of private property the question is abandoned.

If the dialectic is a valid description of the form of all change it must apply to the short as well as the long term. Their only long term example we shall mention later. Almost all their historical applications of the dialectic are of the type just exemplified in the capitalist and feudal eras. Bertrand Russell is characteristic of commentators in the following passage: 'there was only one triad that concerned him: feudalism, represented by the landowner; capitalism, represented by the industrial employer; and Socialism, represented by the wage-earner.'* As far as we can discover this progression was not dialectically examined, except in its constituent parts, by Marx or Engels, nor can we see how socialism can be shown to be a true synthesis of feudalism and capitalism.

In one letter Marx wrote that a certain critic 'feels himself

**History of Western Philosophy*, p.815.*

obliged to metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in western Europe into an historico-philosophic theory of the *marche générale* imposed by fate upon every people, whatever the historic circumstances in which it finds itself, in order that it may ultimately arrive at the form of economy which will ensure, together with the greatest expansion of the productive powers of social labour, the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon.' Marx then gives an example of similar conditions leading to different results, and concludes, ' by studying each of these forms of evolution separately and then comparing them one can easily find the clue to this phenomenon, but one will never arrive there by the universal passport of a general historico-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being super-historical.'

Of course the dialectic is just such an historico-philosophical theory, is super-historical, though it must be said again that Marx rarely used it. He retained it in an uneasy alliance with a normal empirical approach to contemporary facts. Where he used it it was either with an inadequate knowledge of the ' historic circumstances,' as with feudalism, or it was not dialectics at all but contrasts or contradictions.

In retaining the dialectic Marx lays himself open to a criticism which applies to all such general views of history. That is that they depend upon definitions. For instance a cyclic view of history such as Spengler's depends upon his ability to define historical stages, such as the western Renaissance, as being essentially similar to stages in other cultures, in this case to the sixth, seventh and eighth dynasties in Egyptian culture and the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. in China. This involves selecting essential features in an historical situation, a personal choice which does not necessarily command agreement. A different interpretation of the same situation would invalidate it as evidence supporting the postulated law. A parallel can be found in the essentials of the Toynbee cycle. As an exercise we recommend to parlour-historians the picking of the essential characteristics of the period 1914-49, so as to suit Marx, Spengler and Toynbee.

To instance as a dialectic the triad feudalism—capitalism—socialism it would be necessary to define the essentials of each in order to show opposition and then synthesis—most ' definitions ' would show nothing at all. By this process it is possible to

'prove' anything at all, by treating history as a concertina, shortening or lengthening the periods, defining their chief characteristics, and asserting that historical change is based upon some monistic factor such as, in Marx's case, changes in the means of production.

With more ingenuity than credulity we present the following

Marx and Engels *Dialectical Historical Materialism*		*Chapman and Sinclair* *Dialectical* staatism	
CAUSE OF HISTORICAL CHANGE	Changes in the means of production		Changes in the method of organization
HISTORY	Is a class warfare based upon changes in the means of production		Is a war of élites or governing classes based upon changes in the forms of social organization
THESIS	Feudal society	THESIS	19th century bourgeois state
ANTITHESIS	Primitive capital accumulation and the bourgeoisie	ANTITHESIS	Ballot democracy and Trade Unionism
SYNTHESIS	*Laisser-faire* capitalist society	SYNTHESIS	Social democratic governments
THESIS	Capitalist society	THESIS	20th century democratic state aiming at social security
ANTITHESIS	Development of proletariat	ANTITHESIS	Bureaucracy
SYNTHESIS	Classless socialist state	SYNTHESIS	Benevolent managerialism

analysis of nineteenth and twentieth century history. It could be asserted that the monistic cause of historical change is the method of social organization and that its development explains, for example, the change from liberalism and the limited franchise to social democracy, and also proves the inevitability of the benevolent bureaucrat. The facts presented by G. D. H. Cole on Trade Union history and by James Burnham in *The Managerial Revolution* could be said to 'prove' our dialectic in the same sense as *Capital* and the rest prove the parallel dialectic.

THE ROLE OF FAITH

Why did Marx cling to an essentialist position though he warned against its dangers whenever prompted by those who attempted to follow in his wake? Why did Engels write, 'I am of course no longer a Hegelian, but I still have a great feeling of piety and devotion towards the colossal old chap'? One answer is that their ideas were themselves part of the capitalist 'superstructure' of their own age. Marx began as an Hegelian in Germany. He became a socialist and examined, in 1844, the genesis of the English proletariat within the capitalist system, a development which he conceived as a contradiction. In 1845 he joined his empirical and moral socialism to his modification of Hegel's theories, in the synthesis of dialectical materialism, a marriage more unhappy than most. Marx had come to socialism with a certain training. It must have seemed natural to apply that training to the research and the discoveries which ensued. The dialectic and socialism seemed indissolubly bound up.

This was not without its advantages. The Hegelian system in itself had provided a *Weltanschauung* (world-view) for the Prussian nationalist-conservative. Even *laisser-faire* was provided, under the Benthamites, with an explanation, the pleasure-pain principle, to tie together all human phenomena. Even these greatest of empiricists found it necessary to go round under the banner of a unifying principle. In Germany the hope of philosophy, which is the chimera of a unified knowledge, had found its refuge, fleeing from the revolutionary armies. It was, in over simple terms, the fashion to seek such an explanation. Moreover, given such an explanation, prediction, and therefore leadership, came within the province of the philosopher. To understand the past would then mean the capacity to plot the future. Faith in the

rightness and in the virtually certain victory of one's cause has obviously been one of the great political dynamics. Dialectics, for Marx, were the sub-structure of a prophetic plan which allowed him at once to condemn Utopian Socialists and yet to show that victory for the Marxian-led proletariat was almost inevitable. We say 'almost' because, as usual, he hedged. This evasion of absolute certainty left room for correct leadership. The certainty provided the fuel of hope and a moral stand-point—in the future. Marx could also justify his empiricism by pointing out that faith in dialectical materialism was not a dogmatic formula, while his vagueness in its use let successors employ it in just this way.

'Moreover from the outset, like everyone who declares that he has a panacea for the sufferings of the masses in his pocket, he gave his agitation a religious and sectarian character. Every sect is in fact religious. Further, just because he was the founder of a sect he denied all natural connection with the earlier movement *both in Germany and outside*. He fell into the same mistake as Proudhon, and instead of looking among the genuine elements of the class movement for the real basis of his agitation, he tried to prescribe their course to these elements according to a certain dogmatic recipe.' Who, having read Marx denouncing wrong-headed working-class Chartists, incorrect rival theoreticians, and stupid socialist pioneers, could have believed that Marx would be so clear-headed about his own errors in another man, this time Lassalle. When one compares the subsequent elaboration of Marxism with Marx's writings one can see where this mode of faith-healing led his followers. Many analysts of Marxism have asserted that it is a religion, its followers a sect. Bertrand Russell has said that to understand Marx psychologically one should use a dictionary on these lines:

The Messiah	—	Marx
The Elect	—	The Proletariat
The Second Coming	—	The Revolution.

H. G. Wells early stated that the Communist Party represented the priests, the purges the Inquisition, the leadership the cardinalate, and so on. It is our thesis that, so much is this so, the dialectic, the faith-giving basis of Marxism, has a genuine theological ancestry. We have indicated the important role of faith in the inevitable operation of the dialectic. Its great power derives

not only from the irrational certainty it sustains, but also from a seemingly universal emotional validity exhibited by and tapped from its origins. To these origins we now turn.

OSIRIS AND ADONIS, CHURCH FATHERS

Marx learnt the dialectic from Hegel and Hegel apparently learnt it from the gods. Among the Greeks it was a method of moving in the direction of truth by means of argument, a procedure, minus its third stage, well known in New Zealand, where all discussions consist of statement and contradiction. Hegel transformed it into a process, 'a divine process.' Plato, Kant, and Fichte, according to one authority, had suggested a three-fold movement of thought, but in the form in which Marx knew it, it belonged to Hegel. Hegel believed he had shown Kant's antinomies to be reconcilable at the level of reason, forming a simple three-fold sequence. His next step was to see in all reality this same process. The workings of the dialectic were exhibited by history and by the physical world. Marx, we are told by all Communist pamphlets, stood the dialectic on its feet, resting on matter instead of mind. But one of the interesting questions is how it came to exist, albeit on its head, anyway.

Our search for the dialectic leads us straight to Hegel's early days when he was not only concerned with the contemporary German philosophy and antinomies of thought, but with a simpler dialectic which was a process. Hegel's first studies were on the life of Jesus, the origins of Christianity, and Greek and Jewish religion. He was acquainted with the Hindu religion, of great interest to Europeans of his time, and was fascinated by primitive religion and mythology. Here, in the mythology which has now gained such extensive currency as a result of Frazer's researches, he found the constituents of his theories which were missing from those of his contemporaries. The evolutionary nature of these myths satisfied one demand of his time. The inevitable progress involved in the fructification of seed satisfied another. The manner in which spirit magically informed the processes of nature matches his later theory. And above all he found the great symbolic thesis and antithesis, life and death, reconciled by birth, in a dialectic which was not a puzzle but a sequence, a process. Hegel's dialectic was born at the confluence of Aristotle, Kant, and Adonis. It is a sophisticated version of the oldest of myths.

Later, when writing of his dialectic, he frequently illustrated the connection. ' This progressive progress,' he said, ' is represented by Adonis.' He wrote of the Phoenix legend, of Osiris, and frequently called Death ' The Negation,' and the Resurrection ' the negation of the negation, namely that death is slain.' Of the death of the Phoenix he explains ' This estrangement, this otherness, defined as a natural negation is death, but death that is at the same time annulled, since out of it there issues a revival and renewal of life.'* In discussing Aphrodite, Hegel wrote: 'As regards its direct interpretation, this myth, it is true, has reference to the seed lying under the ground, and then springing up out of it . . . Its true meaning, however, is not merely the alternation of nature, but the transition generally from life, from affirmative Being, to death, to negation, and then again the rising up out of this negation—the absolute mediation which essentially belongs to the notion or conception of spirit.'† The dialectic, in fact, is the vegetation myth, transformed symbolically to a ' description of the Absolute,' to Hegel's realms of spirit, where it stood, upside down, awaiting Marx.

In a most revealing passage in *Anti-Dühring* Engels acknowledges their debt to seasonal growth and change, to primitive mythology, in explaining the dialectic by reference to barley. Here is the passage: ' But what then is this fearful negation of the negation . . . A very simple process which is taking place everywhere and every day, which any child can understand as soon as it is stripped of the veil of mystery in which it was wrapped by the old idealist philosophy and in which it is to the advantage of helpless metaphysicians of Herr Dühring's capacity to keep it enveloped. Let us take a grain of barley . . . if such a grain of barley meets with conditions which for it are normal, if it falls on suitable soil then under the influence of heat and moisture a specific change takes place, it germinates; the grain as such ceases to exist, it is negated, and in its place appears the plant which has arisen from it, the negation of the grain . . . It grows, flowers, is fertilized and finally once more produces grains of barley, and as soon as these have ripened the stalk dies, is in its turn negated. As a result of the negation of the negation we have

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**Philosophy of Religion*, London, 1895, Vol. II, p.84.
†*Ibid.*, p.85.

once again the original grain of barley, but not as a single unit, but ten, twenty or thirty fold.' The Corn King has tottered down the ages into the pages of Marx and Engels, there to stand as symbol for the process which all history is said to display, and to carry on his back the laboratory of the new science of society, Marxism. From these pages the mythical guilty bearer of fertility appears, Devil or God, before the twentieth century, and pesters the opponents of Lysenko.

THE WAGES OF SIN

The only manner in which Marx and Engels may be said to have moved among the myths which saw the birth of the dialectic is in their studies of 'primitive communism.' The revolutionary theories of Bachofen and Morgan burst into the Victorian world, to shock, and in the case of Marx and Engels, to please. Their theories, supported by archaeological and ethnological evidence, were the first real attack on the problem of kinship, and began a debate which outlasted the Queen. Was marriage individualistic or communistic in its origins? They plumped for primitive group marriage, hetairism. They found a marital progression from promiscuity to monogamy. With the value of their opinions we are not concerned except to note that modern anthropologists, with more evidence, with knowledge of infinite combinations of kinship elements, have abjured the responsibility of this grand generalization. But Marx and Engels found in Morgan's book on *Ancient Society* (1877) an evolutionary theory which seemed to extend their theory of historical materialism back to the beginnings of history.

Engels wrote his *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,* after the death of Marx, using Marx's notes, and plunged into the realms of promiscuity and polyandry, into matriarchal and matrilinear mysteries. History, he found, began with the 'gens,' a family group, a primitive communistic group in which descent was at first traced through the mother, paternity being uncertain. He moved in the fascinating, shadowy world of the virgin birth, in which the woman, as mother, was the focus, since even the cause of births was at first unknown. His 'history' moved in the aura of the primitive goddesses, reflections of these women-dominated societies,* which prompted the apocryphal

*See J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion.*

apophthegm attributed to the Saviour, 'I have come to destroy the works of the female.'* Engels and Marx came to destroy the works of the male. For within this beautiful though primitive society arose private property. Engels does not know how it occurred, does not know 'how and when the herds passed from the common possession of the tribe or the gens into the property of the individual heads of the families,' but from it arose many evils, in fact all of the evils of modern society. 'Monogamy arose from the concentration of great riches into a single hand—that of man—and from the need to bequeath these riches to the children of that man and not of any other.' All the—unpleasant—features which he found in monogamy, had, he believed, their origin in property relations, but with a return to a higher communism, this 'predominance of man in marriage will disappear.'

At this time of change Engels found that an increase in production, due to advances in techniques, brought wealth, and the need for more labour. War provided slaves. Slavery represented the first division of labour, the origin of the classes, rich and poor, 'exploiters and exploited.' The identity of interest of the gens society had given way now to antagonism. 'The gens organization of society had ceased to live. It had been burst asunder by the division of society into classes. It was replaced by the *State*.' The state, which is to wither away in the final synthesis, is 'the executive committee of the ruling class,' which holds its sway by using the army as its instrument. The bourgeois marriage, exploitation, class warfare, the army, the state, all are hung upon the mysterious appearance of private property.

Here, then, is the greatest of the Marxian dialectics. Under primitive communism, Engels asserts in *Anti-Dühring*, the common ownership of land becomes a fetter on the development of agriculture and 'it is abolished, negated,' giving way to a society based on private property and characterized by all its implications. This will, now that private property is a fetter on production, finally lead to a higher, finer Communism in which the evils of private property will disappear—though how this is a synthesis is not clear. What is clear is the nature of this change. It is the migration of men from Paradise to a—terrestrial—heaven. The gens society is Paradise. Private property is sin. This notion

*Quoted by Robert Graves in *King Jesus*.

itself has a long history—more than one mediaeval philosopher thought that 'private property is mortal sin.' The appearance of sin initiates the life-death process, the dialectic, which begins and ends with private property. Communism will be heaven.

It is interesting to speculate how great a contribution to the religious conviction generated by modern Marxism the dialectical life-death myth makes. Edmund Wilson has said* that Hegel's *These, Antithese* and *Synthese* was the old Trinity, taken from Christian theology as the Christians took it from Plato; that this was the magic triangle, symbol of power and certainty which probably derived its significance from its correspondence to the male sexual organs, as does the magical number three, beloved of psycho-analysts. The bourgeois intellectual poets and novelists seeking among esoteric legends for a backbone and nervous system for the flesh of their words, and hoping thus to establish a link with the mass mind, may be further from their goal than their realist proletarian colleague in the next cubicle. Students of modern social anthropology will be less disposed than the nineteenth century rationalists to dismiss the power of such ancient invocations, woven as they are into the very fabric of western culture.

D. M. Anderson

Aspects of Auden

THESE notes on some of W. H. Auden's recent poems make no claim to exhaustiveness. Their justification is to be sought in the interest and stimulus offered by the poetry and they are perhaps best thought of as sparks produced by its impact. (They were written before the appearance of *The Age of Anxiety*, and I have not attempted to bring them up to date.)

A great deal can be done by studying Mr Auden's text without extraneous aids, especially if one is willing to ignore the notes to *New Year Letter* (except the few that are immediately helpful).

* *To the Finland Station*, p.190.

The poetry that will concern us, then, is part of *New Year Letter*, *The Sea and the Mirror* and *For the Time Being*. All of it was written after Mr Auden's withdrawal to America, and during the war years. 'War Poetry,' in spite of his constant concern in the past for politics, is perhaps the last thing to be expected of him; the poets of his generation wrote their war poetry on Spain, and the same reasons can seldom be made twice. Yet the impact of war is evident in these poems at a different level, that of interpretation rather than that of intervention.

The unity of *New Year Letter*, though real, is obscured by the mass of the author's annotations with their wide-ranging allusions; and this fact must be the excuse for my piecemeal treatment of it. Mr Auden's central preoccupation throughout the work with which these notes deal is the problem of order; in the lines at the beginning of Part III:

> I felt the unexpected power
> That drove our ragged egos in
> From the dead-ends of greed and sin
> To sit down at the wedding-feast,

we have this problem touched upon in terms that link its political and social aspects with the psychology of the individual, and with the Kingdom of God. The distinguishing characteristic of the Kingdom is that the freewill of the parts is concordant with the order of the whole. The rest of Part III is a survey of the political, social, psychological and mental chaos of our time; although occasionally the antithesis of chaos and order is put into other terms, such as becoming and being, and also Purgatory and Heaven. That is to say that there is a single problem having metaphysical and theological, as well as other aspects. Mr Auden's discussion of it in this poem is little more than exploratory, and the tone is pessimistic:

> But wishes are not horses: this
> Annus is not Mirabilis;
> Day breaks upon the world we know
> Of war and wastefulness and woe,
> Ashamed civilians come to grief
> In brotherhoods without belief,
> Whose good intentions cannot cure
> The actual evils they endure . . .

His position in this poem is thus half-way in the Christian dialectic: realization of human impotence and, welling up from it, the prayer of humility with which the *Letter* concludes.

Related in Mr Auden's treatment to the problem of order is the nature of art, to which he devotes a paragraph in Part I of the same poem. Order—he says there—'is the state of the fulfilled' (hence its already-noted identification with being in opposition to becoming and with Heaven in opposition to Purgatory), and cannot be realized in life, which is a process of becoming. Art, on the other hand, offers us order, but as a *fait accompli;* in being thus presented, experience is made into something typical,

> An abstract model of events
> Derived from dead experience,
> And each life must itself decide
> To what and how it be applied.

The implications of these last two lines for literary criticism are illustrated in Mr Auden's subsequent war-time poems, *The Sea and the Mirror* and *For the Time Being*, which I introduce together because they are companion pieces, published in one volume. The first is a commentary on *The Tempest;* the second, called 'a Christmas oratorio,' really performs the same function for the drama of Christ's incarnation. For Christmas, although its dramatic possibilities have been explored even less than those of Easter, illumines all comedy by its supreme reconciliation, just as a full aesthetic of tragedy might be excogitated from the events of Holy Week.

The question, then, in *The Sea and the Mirror*, is how to apply the 'abstract model of events' contained in *The Tempest*. For many readers this play has a profound significance. In it they see the ultimate repose of the master's sorely-tried spirit, the serene wisdom of his old age. Prospero, especially, seems to show the way of wisdom through his magnanimity and his renunciation, and the play, at its close, to have illustrated a way of reducing to harmony the discordances that vex weary humanity.

In his commentary Mr Auden, with the aid of Freud, shows us a less sentimental picture of Prospero. The selfless magnanimity of his dealings with men is only one side of the man. On the other side a slave-master appears, one who speaks a familiar language:

I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
With words that made them known.

A slave-master, in short, who brings the savages all the benefits of civilization! Thanks to his magic power Prospero has been able to split his personality more completely than most men; his relationship to Caliban is, so to speak, a rubbish-tip for all that he has purified other relationships of. Mr Auden makes him address these words to Ariel, the instrument of his magic power:

We did it, Ariel, between us; you found on me a wish
For absolute devotion; result—his wreck
That sprawls in the weeds and will not be repaired:
My dignity discouraged by a pupil's curse,
I shall go knowing and incompetent into my grave.

The discordances are, after all, still unharmonized.

But the picture of Prospero slides, further, into that of the poet renouncing his powers and awakening to the realities of the world:

Now our partnership is dissolved, I feel so peculiar:
As if I had been on a drunk since I was born
And suddenly now, and for the first time, am cold sober,
With all my unanswered wishes and unwashed days
Stacked up all round my life; as if through the ages I had dreamed
About some tremendous journey I was taking,
Sketching imaginary landscapes, chasms and cities . . .

And now, in my old age, I wake, and this journey really exists,
And I have actually to take it, inch by inch,
Alone and on foot, without a cent in my pocket,
Through a universe where time is not foreshortened . . .

Consider the number of poets who have failed to achieve a satisfactory relationship with the society where they lived, and the further number of those who believe that their ideal condition

would be one in which this problem was completely evaded (i.e. in which society would support them and 'leave them free'), and it becomes clear that poets, especially unsuccessful ones, tend to make the world at large their psychological rubbish-tip, as opposed to their private imaginative world. In the rough handling Mr Auden gives to this tendency in his biography of a poet in Chapter III he is expressing the social concern that has always characterized him; but the terms of his analysis are new. For society at large, influenced no doubt by that 'shroud of temper' (*New Year Letter*, line 733) in which Marx involved his determinism, the rubbish-tip most favoured at present is the economic relationship; hence the barbarity of much economic theory propounded by those who, like Prospero, are on top of the prevailing set-up. In all these typical cases some personal relationship is refused, and by its refusal that order which demands a significant relationship between all its parts is destroyed.

However, man appears on the scene in the role of Caliban as well as in that of Prospero. When a fully personal relationship is refused—for example, in the economic sphere in *laissez-faire* capitalism—there are two possible reactions. The one is that of Prospero: to seal off, as it were, the disorderly part and draw satisfaction (real, but spurious under analysis) from the order evident in the remainder of life. Those who react in this fashion do less damage to their own psychic forces, and feel themselves, and are felt, to be superior to those who make the other reaction, that of Caliban. In this the refused relationship, instead of serving as a rubbish-tip, is allowed to dominate and disorder the whole mind; for lack of an essential element, the entire structure is warped. We see the familiar signs of this distortion in Caliban's answer when Prospero, as quoted above, reminds him of his indebtedness:

> You taught me language; and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
> For learning me your language.

And so it is Caliban, in Chapter III of the poem, who is the guide of humanity to a world in which no relationships exist, only uninterpreted facts; the world, in short, of the physical sciences in which the observer is systematically excluded so that his observations have no significance for him.

We are now in a position to see the significance of Mr Auden's title for this poem. The mirror symbolizes the refused relationship, the narcissistic introversion in which the person cannot get beyond himself, as if he lived surrounded by mirrors. Like the mirror, too, he receives nothing into his being, but stops everything on the surface. Hence the loneliness attributed to mirrors, in contrast to the complete relationship of love, in Miranda's villanelle in Chapter II. To the sea, on the other hand, Mr Auden makes only one notable reference, early in Part I; but from this it is clear that he associates it with receptivity, acceptance, and detachment. The contrast of brittleness and fluidity is also suggestive.

What we may call the ways of the mirror, as we have seen, are two; and to them both is opposed that of the sea. If philosophy and theology rather than poetry were in question, the discussion would be carried on in terms of idealism, materialism, and faith; but here it will suffice to indicate the analogy and to remark that the 'we' of the last two pages of Chapter III pass clean out of the realm of philosophical systems into that of response to a truth that is also a Person, that is, of acceptance of a personal relationship.

The Sea and the Mirror is immediately followed by *For the Time Being*, 'a Christmas oratorio.' The antithesis of Prospero and Caliban, set now in a larger frame, is continued in the opposition of the Wise Man to the Shepherds and resolved in the meeting of these six round the sleeping Child; but it is no longer the kernel of the poem.

The scene is set in the first section, called *Advent*; and it is a composite picture of a Rome from which the spirit had departed and of our own generation likewise trembling on the brink of decadence. This double focus (*New Year Letter*, line 829) is so maintained that while our knowledge that Rome did in fact fall warns us for our own future, our acquaintance with the present helps us to sympathize with that age, and the light of Christ shines on the one as much as on the other.

The first of the Christmas story's two foci—the Annunciation—follows immediately. Here Mr Auden introduces the four faculties, the means by which man can receive communication and understand it; and presents them in a state of debauchery reflecting the modern world. Some of the imagery of this section belongs to the technique of dream-analysis, but most of it, from

the fairground and the derelict factory, is less recondite. Then Mary, the instrument by which Love and Flesh are re-united after their corrupting separation by the instrumentality of Eve, gives thanks:

> My flesh in terror and fire
> Rejoices that the Word
> Who utters the world out of nothing,
> As a pledge of His word to love her
> Against her will, and to turn
> Her desperate longing to love,
> Should ask to wear me,
> From now to their wedding day,
> For an engagement ring.

Thus St Joseph appears before us placed by the Holy Ghost (as another critic has pointed out) in one of the stock comic situations. The question of reverence or good taste that arises from Mr Auden's treatment of this situation is worth some examination, for the principle on which he would apparently defend himself is far-reaching. His statement of it is to be found in the section *The Meditation of Simeon*, in the eleventh paragraph, where we read:

> Nor is the Ridiculous a species any longer of the Ugly; for since of themselves all men are without merit, all are ironically assisted to their comic bewilderment by the Grace of God. Every Cabinet Minister is the woodcutter's simple-minded son to whom the fishes and the crows are always whispering the whereabouts of the Dancing Water or the Singing Branch, every heiress the washerwoman's butter-fingered daughter on whose pillow the fairy keeps laying the herb that could cure the Prince's mysterious illness.
>
> Nor is there any situation which is essentially more or less interesting than another. Every tea-table is a battlefield littered with old catastrophes and haunted by the vague ghosts of vast issues, every martyrdom an occasion for flip cracks and sententious oratory.

Of the last sentence most of us, I imagine, would readily assent to the first half, but deny the second with more or less feeling of outrage. But is not Mr Auden's point that response on the level that is aware of old catastrophes and vague ghosts is no less

inadequate in God's sight than response on the level of flip cracks and sententious oratory? This argument, of course, does not obliterate the difference between the two levels, but it does transform it. One dare no longer claim that a (let us say Arnoldian) high sense of tragedy is a token of superior sensitivity; for no situation is tragic or comic in essence, and every situation is both, according to the viewpoint, in a strictly correlative degree of intensity. Even the 'indescribably inexcusably awful' (*The Sea and the Mirror*, Chap. III) mess man makes of the world by his own efforts is made comic by the constant availability of grace (if only the poor fool knew it!). The romantics with their appalling certainty that life is real, life is earnest, could see only the tragic aspect of the picture; but it is also possible that all man's grand and noble failures result merely from the comic pride of a creature who has still to learn his proper insignificance, and that to look upon them as tragedies is merely a way of consoling that pride. In that case a high sense of tragedy is itself the richest of comic spectacles. One remembers the mood of Prospero leaving his island for Milan:

> Over there, maybe, it won't seem quite so dreadful
> Not to be interesting any more, but an old man
> Just like other old men . . .

And one understands how sorely St Joseph was tempted to put himself in a comic situation (or make himself out a tragic victim, which would have come to the same thing).

> JOSEPH
>
> All I ask is one
> Important and elegant proof
> That what my Love had done
> Was really at your will
> And that your will is Love.
>
> GABRIEL
>
> No, you must believe;
> Be silent, and sit still.

From the focus of the Annunciation, which is God's initiative, we move onwards to the focus at the Manger, where man's response is made. Here the Wise Men are opposed to the repre-

sentatives of the proletariat, the Shepherds, in two antiphonal choruses, the first a confession of their sins (pride and fear, respectively), the second a chorus of praise and supplication. By thus responding to the Love of God, these men have entered into the relationship hitherto refused, which consists on the one side of the Divine Love and on the other of that free response that Dante names 'carità,'* whose power stills the wills of the blessed spirits in heaven.

It remains to show forth other reactions of men to the Divine Love in two so dissimilar types as Simeon and Herod. Whereas the Shepherds, and even the Wise Men, had been as children theologically, Simeon speaks out of the full wealth of Hebrew tradition (although here again there is a double focus that brings in the present time); he retraces the whole Christian dialectic of destruction and reconstruction, which is also the book's overall pattern; and in sharp contrast to their joyful hymns, he gravely pronounces:

> Wherefore, having seen Him, not in some prophetic vision of what might be, but with the eyes of our own weakness as to what actually is, we are bold to say that we have seen our salvation.

Herod's reaction to the event is a prudent scepticism which leads him eventually, for the greatest good of the greatest number, to order the massacre of the innocents. The double focus, this time with satirical intent, is sufficiently obvious.

And so, while the soldiers amuse themselves and Rachel mourns, St Joseph and the Blessed Virgin cross the desert to Egypt on the next stage of their purgatorial way; and the place of their purgatory, the desert, speaks nonsense in the jargon of the tourist advertisement. The environment is, after all, familiar.

> At least three-quarters of our time
> The purgatorial hill we climb,
> Where any skyline we attain
> Reveals a higher ridge again . . .

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*i.e. love. Carità is the human response to the Primo Amore (Primal Love) of God, but the distinction is obscured in English. Cf. *Paradiso*, III, 70f.

To tell the truth, although we stifle
The feeling, are we not a trifle
Relieved to wake on its damp earth?

(*New Year Letter*, line 928 ff.)

And as we trudge for the time being, through the world, much beset by the devil, our strength and consolation is the remembrance of the blessed, in whom charity has had its perfect work and who dance continually 'in the excellent order of the dancing ring.' With that phrase, by which he associates himself with Dante and through him with the whole Christian tradition, Mr Auden rounds off his thought on the problems of our time, and I round off these notes.

Conscription: a symposium

EARLY in July, for reasons given in the Notes in this number, a circular letter was sent out to about forty people inviting them to state their views on conscription in the present situation. They were asked to limit themselves to two hundred words, an inadequate allowance which however was made necessary by considerations of space.

A few of those invited to contribute wrote that they were unable to do so, for various reasons—two because they were officers on the reserve, others because the statements could not appear until after the referendum; while no replies were received from Dr Zealanda Aitken, Kurow; H. Everson, Wellington; J. R. Hanan, M.P.; Dr M. N. Paewai, Kaikohe; Rev. H. J. Ryburn, Dunedin; Dr G. M. Smith, Rawene; H. C. D. Somerset, Wellington; Rev. Martin Sullivan, Wellington; Miss Mary Woodward, New Plymouth.

Because of these abstentions, the balance of opinion hoped for when the list of names was drawn up has not been obtained, yet the variety expected appears nevertheless, among only half of those asked.

The statements received appear below. Contributors were asked to give a few details about themselves, but several of them will be known to readers of *Landfall*.

ARCHIBALD BAXTER, Brighton.

I AM opposed to all war on principle. I look on it as the greatest of crimes, for it includes every other crime.

Conscription is preparation for war, and modern war means the mass destruction of men, women and children on a scale of which the average person is only dimly aware.

I have believed from my youth that the principle of force against force would eventually bring about a position in which the world would find itself divided into two hostile camps. We are heading straight for that position at present. Our leaders are aware of this but nearly all of them speak and think in terms of the past. They demand more and more war preparation because they still adhere to the principle of competitive force which has brought the world to its present perilous position. The times demand a change of policy on the part of governments. The very existence of our civilization depends on it, and we, in New Zealand, have a unique opportunity to do our part in voicing this demand.

My experiences (recorded in *We Will not Cease*) as a conscientious objector in the first World War, when I, along with others, was deported to the front line in France, have strengthened my convictions against war and conscription.

JAMES BERTRAM. University lecturer. N.Z. Territorials to 1931; later war correspondent in China. Joined Hong Kong Volunteers 1941, P.O.W. in Japan.

THE ballot-paper was a good deal clearer than most of the speeches—in which, one noticed, only the politicians spoke without embarrassment. For the scheme proposed was a politicians' scheme: the soldiers can't ever have liked it much, though only the 2nd NZEF Association were (at one time) honest enough to say so.

My own view may be hopelessly dated; but I still think of the defence of New Zealand as primarily a Pacific affair, and I am more afraid of a rebuilt Japan than of anybody else. Had we kept our J-Force up to strength throughout the Allied Occupation we might today have had a firmer voice in Far Eastern policy. We might also by now have had an extended military reserve of some value, with experience of the Pacific theatre.

The record (Territorials and J-Force) seems to prove that New Zealanders have no knack of peace-time soldiering—which is a job for professionals anyway, not for part-timers. The decisive battle of the last war, for us, was the battle of Coral Sea. Doesn't it follow, if we are really concerned for our own defence, that we should do better to put our effort into sea and air forces—with perhaps a few well-trained small mobile technical units, as a first contribution to any general defence scheme?

JANET S. BOGLE, Wellington. N.Z. WAAC, 1944-7 (N.Z., Italy and England). Represented N.Z. University Students Association at World Conference of Students, Prague, 1946. N.Z. representative at World Conference of United Nations Association, Luxembourg, 1946.

IN the life of a man or of a country, war is one of the biggest experiences. As time passes, it is the exhilaration of identifying one's self with a cause, the relief of handing over personal responsibility, and the comradeship of service life that are remembered. The war itself, and the reasons for it, are overlooked in recollection.

If New Zealand is close to war, the decision to train should be made by

the Government, not by the uninformed and largely irresponsible mass of the people. But the Government, having passed over the decision, cannot leave it there. The country is flooded with a mass of propaganda —loyalties are confused by the careful stirring up of patriotism, a limited quality at any time. In the minds of the people the idea is carefully fostered that military training is essential. And as we accept that idea, so we accept the idea that war is inevitable.

The acceptance of the idea is the most dangerous part of a decision to conscript. It is easier to defend physically than to resist mentally. It is a relief when cold war becomes open aggression and it is a relief when we decide to prepare for the possibility of war. A people which has accepted this decision will not bestir itself to look for other ways of creating a state of peace. The need is for a more positive attitude—a personal responsibility and an informed awareness rather than a passive acceptance of whatever may come.

WALTER BROOKES, Christchurch. Journalist.

WHEN I was 14, 1923, I was called up for military training under the scheme then existing. My parents, having decided that I should be brought up a pacifist, intervened, and, after a hearing before a magistrate, I was exempted. During the war I appealed as a conscientious objector, and the appeal was allowed. I should imagine, though of course I do not know, that the earlier appeal counted much in my favour. But I see a grave danger to respect for individual freedom in compelling anyone to take a course of action or accept views when he is not considered old enough to decide what he ought to do. At 14 I had very little say; those at 18 are in a better position, but they are still minors in law, have no vote, and are often under parental control. (Children, indeed are compelled to go to school by the State, but only, in theory at any rate, to learn facts, not to be trained for specific action.) This is why I oppose conscription of minors. As a pacifist I oppose all conscription because I see any move towards mobilization anywhere as making war more likely.

R. M. BURDON, M.C., Wellington. Served in France and Italy as an Infantry officer in the Imperial Army, 1915-8, and on the North-West Frontier of India in the Indian Cavalry, 1919-22. Author of *High Country, New Zealand Notables,* etc.

ANY government is bound, unquestionably, to take every possible measure for national self-preservation, but in our case I do not consider conscription the best or only method. I believe, as I always have, that national defence would be better assured by a small regular, or at least long service force, armed with and trained in the use of modern weapons, than by far larger numbers of partially trained, under equipped troops.

(1) In no other way can a striking force be maintained ready for immediate action. (2) The considerable funds employed in maintaining conscripts would be better employed in the purchase of weapons. (3) The disruption

of industry would be less acute. Today a country's strength must be measured by the soundness of its industry and finance rather than by mere muster of bayonets. Italy failed to realize this fact before the last war.

Granted that young men benefit by the discipline of military training; granted also that military training facilitates the choice of war leaders; but it should be possible to attain both these advantages by means less drastic. Nevertheless, I should prefer conscription to the complete absence of any measure for national defence.

The Rev. O. E. BURTON, M.M., Medaille d'Honneur, Wellington.

I FOUGHT throughout the First World War but was completely disillusioned as a result of the Treaty of Versailles and the complete failure of the victorious allies to establish a good peace. Re-examining the whole question of war I came to the conclusion that neither the teaching nor example of Jesus gave any sanction to the war method. Any Christian man who carries the teaching of his faith to its logical conclusion, and who is not sidetracked by extraneous issues, must, I believe, come to the position commonly known as Christian Pacifist. This is absolute as far as war is concerned. Even if a combatant has an ideal end, the method of violence will defeat that end.

Conscription for military service is an act of preparation for war—and is therefore in effect an act of war. A Christian Pacifist therefore is not able either to vote in favour, or if conscription becomes law, to submit to the operation of the law. No doubt some Christian Pacifists will take advantage of the conscience clauses. Some will be exempted by the tribunals. Many others will make no appeal and will quietly submit to imprisonment and loss of privileges. This course is the one I shall advocate after the unfortunate working of the tribunals during the Second World War, the result of which has been that many of the most conscientious men I know 'failed to establish their sincerity' with the result that three years after the fighting ceased they are still without civil rights and remain 'military defaulters on parole.'

If conscription is carried we shall have definitely declared the willingness of New Zealand to march steadfastly along the road to a Third World War.

MARGARET DALZIEL. Headmistress, St Hilda's Collegiate School, Dunedin.

I OBJECT to the method of deciding the issue. First, why a referendum? If compulsory military service is necessary, it should be introduced by Parliament in the ordinary way. I dislike being made a pawn in a dubious political manoeuvre. Secondly, I dislike being asked to determine even slightly the destiny of people who themselves have no vote in the matter. If it be answered that the destinies of the young are constantly so determined, for instance in education, education is at least meant to do *them* good. Claims that compulsory military service will do the same may be true, but are beside the point.

As for the actual issue, no practical advantage is possible unless the

training is superlatively efficient, and based on a realistic understanding of modern warfare. Knowledge of the past does not lead me to expect this. Young men will be employed in unproductive work of little value, at a time when they are badly needed elsewhere. I think this is a silly waste of public money.

Why not a referendum on compulsory domestic service in hospitals or elsewhere for single women between the ages of thirty and forty? Then I would have a right and the will to say yes.

A. R. D. FAIRBURN, Auckland.

ANY defence programme worth twopence would aim at our maintaining possession of these islands for 500 years, not five. It would aim at (*a*) (internationally) the organizing of trade through clearing-houses, rather than the present dog-eat-dog system (cf. U.S.A.-British relations); (*b*) re-distribution of Commonwealth population (I've heard nothing about this from the conscriptionists); (*c*) abolition of soil-mining, criminally wasteful sewage-disposal, and other sabotage (no word of this so far); (*d*) creating national morale (I've not heard conscriptionists criticizing our over-all pattern of rackets, which is making us a nation of cynics); and so forth.

I've not heard of any Chinese plot to capture New Zealand. I admit there has been talk of war in both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., but I find it difficult to believe that squad-drill for 18-year-olds in New Zealand will rescue the world from atomic warfare.

I'm not what Mr Fraser calls a 'Commonist.' But when I hear him frothing at the microphone, with a chorus of newspaper editors (most of whom have never smelt gunpowder except on November 5th) backing him up, my judgment hardens.

Briefly, I think the present proposals are political humbug.

H. P. FOWLER. Sheep farmer, South Otago.

I AM opposed to the proposal because I believe that the more powers of decision that the individual can retain, the more likely we are to achieve a sane society. Nor can I overlook that in most countries where conscription is the norm, the right of the individual to decide—i.e. the right of conscientious objection—has not survived. Even in Britain, where the rights of conscience are more evenly recognized than here, it is open to question whether the capacity to object isn't being eliminated. I think that in our politically docile community the retreat would be more rapid.

At present society is in the grip of a lethargy and lacks the will to produce the things it demands. Theoretically it can produce them by compulsorily manning the mines, farms and factories, but since the only compulsion acceptable to free societies is compulsion for military purposes, there is real danger that we will drift into World War III as a hangover from World War II. It has yet to be demonstrated that modern States can exist without war as their motive power and, therefore, only by opposing all measures of military purpose can we prepare a peaceful society.

M. K. JOSEPH. Served as bombardier, Royal Artillery (Field, later Air O.P.), 1940-6: England and Northwest Europe. Member R.S.A. Lecturer in English, Auckland University College, since 1946.

I SUPPORT conscription as the least of several possible evils.

(1) In a world of heavily armed superstates with rigid ideological barriers, *pacificism* is impossible because it invites its own destruction.

(2) *Isolationism* ('New Zealand is too small to defend itself') is completely unreal. New Zealand must defend itself by belonging to associations of like-minded states, and fighting, if necessary, outside its own shores (as it always has done).

(3) Defence on a *voluntary* basis has twice demonstrated its weakness. That leaves—

(4) Military preparedness involving *compulsory* service. To be effective this must be thoroughly modernized, and would thus also provide training in skills useful in civilian life. It would not 'regiment' young people; army experience produces a healthy reaction against 'regimental' minds.

God forbid that we should have another war: we might survive, much that we need and value would not. Military preparation offers the least desperate chance of immediately avoiding war, and is a deterrent to successful aggression short of war (inspired *coup d'etat*, etc.) in countries united with us in interest. It is the only way to obtain a breathing-space in which to found a more lasting peace on international co-operation and understanding. And that must come from both sides.

H. P. KIDSON, Wanaka. Ex-Rector, Otago Boys' High School, former member Otago University Council, former territorial officer.

MY feelings are that we are doomed to re-arm. I don't see how the Labour Party at Home can be deceived about the reality of the threat from Russia. We are now being attacked by an army not of persuaders but of fanatics and whole Christian provinces have already fallen, as they did to the Muslim conquerors. Although universal re-armament may cause us all to go up in a bang it is worth taking a chance. Anyway, rather than submit to an intolerable tyranny better all go up in proud and angry smoke.

I myself had a lot of satisfaction from territorial work. You co-operate with all sorts and find talent, wit and good nature where perhaps you least expect it; you handle a lot of sleek mechanical stuff; field craft makes you take a new look at 'country'; good food and the out-of-doors give you physical well-being; there is satisfaction in gaining, even as a lance-Jack, the confidence and co-operation of your 'men.'

Intelligent men must be perturbed at the necessity for conscription, but they should accept it loyally if it is imposed and 'give it a go' with all their hearts and mind.

JOHN A. LEE, Auckland.

My contribution to your conscription symposium is probably too belated. No apologies, I fear, I have been so darned busy turning out material in time for the day that I have had no time for a concentration in two hundred words. If not too late I'll use a few lines from Woodbine Willie, parson poet, First World War.

Waste of muscle, waste of brain
Waste of patience, waste of pain
Waste of work and waste of wealth
Waste of manhood, waste of health
Waste of blood and waste of tears
Waste of youth's most precious years.

EDWARD LEEDS. Arts student, Canterbury University College. Editor of *Canta*, official college newspaper.

It is unfortunate that the views that I can present give little indication of the bulk of university students' opinion. Such an aim could not be realized in this brief space since the variety of opinion within this body is no less than that encountered outside it. However, what was formerly of the greatest importance to students lost much of its personal significance through the proposal to restrict enlistment to 18 year olds.

Thus as one just old enough to escape possible conscription, I might easily stoop to the utterance of platitudes about patriotism and other empty concepts. But the war years was the period of my adolescence—impressionable years upon which, through a belief in all the false gods one can believe in, the glory of war, not its horror, left its mark. The peace I looked forward to brought insecurity worse than war. Salvation for the masses through intellectual awareness or religious enthusiasm became dead ideals. Preparation for defence, however false the motives inspiring it and however ghastly its ends, was a more buoyant straw for the multitude to clutch than no ideal at all.

The whole of the conscription campaign has shown just how empty of ideals our lives really are. Even pacifism as an ideal divorced of any cogent philosophy is, in the words of Herbert Read, ' the negation of an abstraction.' We are offered a wealth of euphonious slogans, but these do not constitute any real basis for a way of life.

J. K. MILNER, Christchurch. Served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, taken prisoner in Crete. Dominion Secretary, Over-Seas League.

For six years I was a very junior officer in a rather senior Highland regiment. Consequently my views upon conscription may be regarded as being somewhat biased. They are certainly biased against the inconsistency of the Government which, owning to top secret information concerning

national and Empire security, throws the onus of this vital measure of preparedness upon the emotional will of society. It is not that I fear the issue will fail—indeed I expect a 75-25 affirmative vote—but I curse this Referendum which lays open a thousand years of British progress to vilification and misrepresentation. During these past six weeks press and radio, platform and street corner have all borne testimony to our freedom of speech. Cant, humbug, treason—all have gushed from the opponents of this issue, and in pausing to relight a mellow pipe I see the phoenix of that spirit which once was Rome's and which equally well may be England's. Our recourse to war in 1939 heralded a confoundedly unpleasant and destructive era for those who came within the orbit of hostilities, and as the war of freedom gained in destructive tempo, so did the liberties and freedoms of the individual recede apace: and with peace so did our high ideals contort again to the hideous fantasy of appeasement to evil. In these three years of peace eleven nations have gone East and our pledge of a 'Free and Independent Poland' moulders beneath the ruins of Warsaw. In this new conception of war the only and cardinal defence lies in internal security and in re-establishing the moral value of our cause and destiny. Conscription will safeguard internal security, and upon that security let us prepare for the inevitable fight for survival.

W. H. OLIVER. Lecturer in History, Victoria University College.

I DO not think that the move towards conscription is a defence measure against communism, for in public that word is no more than an indiscriminate term of abuse. The move seems rather inspired by hysteria and self-interest.

Neither the politicians nor the daily press have regarded international affairs with candour. While they seek to lead the public like sheep, they are hypnotized by their own slogans. They imply that war is inevitable; they ignore the way in which human effort makes either peace or war. But when they are not hysterical their motive is self-interest. They call for the defence of liberty and conscience; but they want to preserve an inequitable spread of the means of subsistence. The Prime Minister was more honest than most when he exhorted the country to defend the highest standard of living in the world.

Because I believe this analysis to be true, I think the conscription move based upon a wish for war if peace cannot be obtained cheaply. One essential condition for peace is a well-fed world, and that requires a general levelling process. I do not think that we are really ready to purchase peace with our standard of living.

E. A. OLSSEN. Lecturer in Political Science, University of Otago.

IN the absence of any other argument, the government's strongest point was to request an affirmative vote for reasons which could not be disclosed. It is a plea which circumstances may justify; but the appeal will only convince if the voter is persuaded of the bona fides of the plea.

If the situation were so desperate that a negative vote would imperil

New Zealand's security, then why did the government not pass the necessary legislation without a referendum? A government has a responsibility for the people, as well as to the people. The refusal to do this, and risk a defeat at the forthcoming election, suggested that the danger which compulsory military training would help avert did not warrant the possible loss of office.

But if this were true, what explained the decision to introduce an issue which, whatever happened, must cause it to lose votes at the forthcoming election, and which involved the risk of a party split?

The propaganda during the campaign threw no light on this problem. On the other hand, it threw too much light on our methods of conducting a referendum. And those methods have done a good deal to discredit the use of that technique.

BRIAN O'NEILL, Palmerston North. War service, Army, fifteen months in New Zealand, and from January 1945 to July 1946 in Egypt, Italy and Japan. Present occupation, librarian.

AT the back of this demand for conscription there seems to have developed a fairly well defined attitude to our relations with the U.S.S.R.—and the U.S.S.R. is meant in talk about possible aggressors—which can best be labelled the Red Peril complex, and this attitude is implicit in most arguments for conscription.

The Red Peril has all those attributes which, with the conviction generated by years of war propaganda, we believe of Nazi Germany in the thirties, so that policies which we now consider would have been effective then must *ipso facto* be effective now. By preparing to avoid the last war, it is hoped to avoid the next. This analogy has the great attraction of making world events simple and explicable so that further thought is unnecessary. Also it has the added advantage of making the policy of ensuring we win the next war identical with the best policy for avoiding the next war. So we can have it both ways—but can we?

Personally I do not think so, though I cannot justify this here; but fundamentally the Red Peril complex which seems the usual premise for conscription is a way of NOT looking at our international relations, and this is always wrong and usually fatal.

H. WINSTON RHODES. Associate Professor of English, Canterbury University College.

I AM opposed to the Government's peacetime conscription proposals

because they have more to do with trans-Atlantic hysteria than with the defence of this country;

because, if carried, their sole result will be loss of production and the regimentation of the minds of young men, without achieving defence efficiency;

because the prime minister does not have access to information unknown to the prime ministers of other dominions;

because conscription will be interpreted abroad as a contribution to an arms race;

because all proposals for disarmament from the only possible enemy have been turned down again and again;

because the real enemies are poverty, disease, and the unjust distribution of wealth, and the proposals will hinder and not help increased production and better distribution;

because conscription leads to military control of political and social life, and is the first step towards a totalitarian state;

because conscription of manpower is always unfair unless there is conscription of wealth;

because those to be conscripted have no vote, and I refuse to vote that they should defend me;

because every attempt is being made to sway the people by appeals to fear and ignorance, and to hamper the democratic discussion of the proposals.

KEITH SINCLAIR. Two-and-a-half years New Zealand army, as Private, Corporal, Sergeant: instructor in chemical warfare and infantryman: two years overseas in R.N.Z.N.V.R. as Ordinary Seaman and Sub-Lieutenant. Lecturer in History, Auckland University College.

THE referendum on the conscription of young-manpower has produced the rare political phenomenon of international affairs becoming a public concern. The conscriptionists base their case on the international crisis, the opposition deny the existence of a crisis, but the real issue is a national one: is conscription in our interests if there *is* a crisis?

I believe there is a crisis—not the threat from Russia but from war. Western civilization, an urban civilization, cannot survive large-scale bombing, as I saw in Germany, cannot survive further wars. I do not expect New Zealanders to act upon this premise without a local experience of warfare—too late. But the logical implication is plain. We cannot defend our society by fighting in a war involving the destruction of cities. To preserve our values we must preserve our cities. It is not invasion we have to fear, but bombs, and conscription, a step towards participation in a war which no industrial society can win, will not help here. To defend ourselves we must keep out of war. Our best course would be to opt out of the conflict and pray for deliverance from ' things that go boomp in the night.' We may even become an interesting cultural museum, a new Alexandria, isolationist, but alive.

JOHN SUMMERS, Christchurch. Three years overseas as orderly in No. 1 New Zealand General Hospital, Egypt to Italy.

MEN today are being forced to see that the Sermon on the Mount and Christ's whole life implies the adoption of non-violent means of resistance to evil. From this source springs not only the absolute conviction of those

who believe that ' grace ' will enable them to meet their enemies in a spirit of love which overrules the values of national self preservation, but also the more moderate belief of people who cannot subscribe to things plainly beyond their moral reach.

Such people, of whom I am one, believe in being not easily provoked. To us the really great things about Western culture have been done in Christ's name. And war and Christian values are not compatible. If therefore, a sense of sin and fallenness prevents us from whole hearted pacifist convictions, it also acts the other way. It calls us to try and struggle out of the pit of a narrow nationalism whose motives upon analysis have so often proved impure. Evidence suggests that the West is, in the name of imperialism, provoking herself; the more reason to refuse to panic. And always we can hear '— why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say.'

GORDON TROUP. Liaison Officer, Canterbury University College.

LOOKING on military training as a teacher interested in Training, for sports, professions or leadership, I find universal education desirable as a preparation for total life, which we must partake in, and military training for all classes just as sound as a preparation for total war, which is periodically imposed on us unsought.

Once we become involved, war is most deadly to troops with poor N.C.O.'s and junior officers. Our good potential officers need sifting, discovering and training, which all takes time and large numbers, i.e. compulsory training.

But the privates? Are they just chopping-blocks for aspiring officers? Not entirely. They have jobs to learn—more and more skilled. Leisurely learning is better than cram. Half-trained gunners or ground-staff can be lethal to their own side. Moreover, the privates' knapsacks may secrete marshals' batons.

Defence in war is too vital to entrust to professional soldiers. We must have the best leaders discoverable, but they must know the score. A trained democracy is less likely to be led up the path by a militant few, and more likely to retrieve the mistakes of its high command.

Thus, if our fate is to deal with life, we can live more acutely, knowledgeably criticizing our leaders; if with death, then the single-chop of the skilled chicken-slayer, not the sixfold chop of the amateur.

HUBERT WITHEFORD, Wellington. Military experience—private, Parliament Buildings Platoon, Home Guard.

WE should think of conscription in New Zealand as part of the general armament of the Western powers against communism. It would be possible to oppose conscription here while supporting that general policy—possible but difficult because the discussion would then turn on technical points on which the last word would be with the military experts.

What should be our attitude to the armament of the West? Armament is not an answer to the most dangerous weapon of the communists, the exploiting of tendencies to disintegration within the states which oppose them. If carried too far it might even enable that weapon to be used more effectively and might also tempt us toward a 'preventive' war in which the spiritual values remaining in Western society would probably be lost. But, to say the least, we are not the only people who might be tempted to start a 'preventive' war. For this reason a cautious defence policy for the West should be opposed only by admirers of communism and by thoroughgoing pacifists. I believe the latter are right in stressing the principle of non-violence, wrong in maintaining that it can be applied absolutely by a community such as our own.

REVIEWS

ROADS FROM HOME. Dan Davin. *Michael Joseph.* 9s. 6d.

DAN Davin's novels have so far shown a steady development. Each tends to correct the faults of its predecessor. *Cliffs of Fall* faced inwards, so that the outside world became a place of shadows. *For the Rest of our Lives,* on the other hand, had both the merits and the defects of the novel that faces outwards: some brilliant reporting, a vivid re-creation of the spirit of the New Zealand forces overseas, but rather too many characters made of cardboard and some long argumentative passages not wholly in place in a novel. The earlier stories in *The Gorse Blooms Pale* pointed towards a synthesis: they got inside the skins of the characters and yet saw them in perspective. And now, in *Roads from Home,* we have a full-length novel with the same setting as these stories, and in something the same vein. And, as if to preserve the contrast, where *For the Rest of our Lives* sprawls, this novel observes the unities rather too faithfully. Its chief fault is the determined neatness with which the loose ends are tied in the final pages.

The setting is Invercargill and the surrounding country, the time is the early thirties, and, if one wished to be grandiloquent, one might say that the theme is simply the human predicament. In particular, the strains and stresses of family relations. The family in question is Irish, Roman Catholic, working-class. Norah Hogan, the mother, is devoted both to her religion and to her men-folk; but a God can bear to be the object of whole-hearted and selfless devotion where a mere man finds the strain irksome. If her husband drinks too much, or her sons stay home from Church, she does not nag at them, or not very much; but she worries, and they know she worries. Her two eldest sons, Ned and John, are both taking tentative steps aside from the path their parents have followed, and both find the

natural perplexities of path-finding increased by the knowledge that every step they take will cause their mother pain.

Ned's problem is religious. He has been at Mosgiel training for the priesthood, and has come home to recover from a nervous breakdown, ostensibly caused by overwork but really by secret doubts about his vocation. His difficulty is not solely one of belief. He is beginning to realize that as a priest he will be a man apart, cut off from the easy fellowship of the football field, the race-course and the pub. Men's voices change when he comes among them. Is it fanciful to suggest that Mr Davin is touching here on the dilemma of the New Zealand intellectual? John Mulgan has said that the New Zealander is not wholly happy whether he stays at home or goes abroad. His culture is a divided one; the books he reads draw him towards Europe and its traditions, but when he gets there he finds that he is, after all, not a returning pilgrim but an alien. In reading *For the Rest of our Lives* one sensed that Mr Davin had, in joining the New Zealand Division, satisfied a nostalgia for New Zealand that must have grown on him in Oxford. Not only a nostalgia for New Zealand sights and sounds, but for a country where, to quote Mulgan again, 'everybody was your friend in a hard, casual way, where a man tramping the roads in the back country could be sure of a night's rest and a meal wherever he stopped.' It is this spirit that is symbolized by Mr Davin's drinking scenes, even when they end in a fight. No doubt in any country the intellectual tends to feel cut off from much of the life around him; but there are special reasons which increase the isolation in New Zealand. And perhaps a New Zealand Rhodes Scholar is almost bound to be something of a divided personality. 'The priest and the poet,' Ned reflects, 'two solitaries, apart and measured against struggles that were not like other men's.'

John Hogan, Ned's brother, is impaled on the other horn of the same dilemma. His special problem is a personal one: he has married a Protestant, she is not happy with him, he does not know what will be best for both of them, and he has the additional worry of keeping the true state of affairs from his mother. But there is more than this involved. Unlike Ned, John has embraced the life of action. Like his father, he is a railwayman. 'Somewhere in his teens, he must have taken a step, remembered now no more than puberty but involving changes as important and unconscious, and become a man of his hands. A step Ned hadn't taken. He hadn't swerved away from books.' And John is beginning to find that the life of zestful, careless action, of hard, casual friendliness, of football and fights and pub crawls, is not wholly satisfying. 'Ferreting wasn't the fun it used to be when he was a kid Paddy's age. Something had gone out of it. You had a tendency now to think about what the rabbit must be feeling. It was all right for kids and ferrets. They were both wild. Only you got tamer as you got older. You began to see what other people were feeling yourself. And from that it wasn't a very big step to thinking what animals must feel about things.'

The problems are not of course confined to the younger generation. Norah Hogan has her worrying to do. And a chat with a friend who has left the railways and taken to farming, a chance encounter with a woman

he knew in his youth, can move Jack Hogan, her husband, to vague regrets for all the alternative roads he might have taken, all the lives he might have lived. We are all, then, in the same predicament. Whichever road we take, we will wonder about the others; and, whichever road we take, we will trample on others more or less, and not least on those who love us.

These are the central themes and they are, I think, well handled. The blurb says that the book is ' the work of a poet '; and the phrase points to its strength and its weakness. Mr Davin is not afraid of the purple patch, or of wringing the utmost significance out of the casual flow of events. Occasionally one wishes for more restraint; but usually both the characters and their reflections are convincing. The most obvious flaw is the contrived ending, which has more than a touch of Hollywood about it; but this is a minor fault.

The background is exceptionally interesting. Some of it is just New Zealand, ably drawn; but most of it is a special New Zealand many of us know little about: a colony of Catholic Irish with their own traditions, their own customs, and apparently, their own idiom. ' He went over to the bookshelf: History of the Irish Struggle, the book of Irish Heraldry, Harry Holland's Armageddon, the bound copy of Chambers' Journal for 1906-1907. Those were the books their minds had woken to.'

This is not the cultural background of most New Zealanders; but it is an interesting, and, one feels, an authentic one.

D. H. Monro

ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEMES IN THE MODERN NOVEL. S. Musgrove. *Auckland University College* (*Bulletin No.* 35, *English Series No.* 3). 2*s.*

' SOME brains will endure but one skimming,' wrote Lamb; but he was referring to himself, and not to German research workers or to their successors, the Americans. It is a sufficiently sobering thought to consider how some of these might have treated, and may yet treat, the subject of Anthropological Themes in the Modern Novel; but Professor Musgrove has contented himself and his readers with suggestive comments and interesting comparisons. He is neither exhaustive nor exhausting. With commendable restraint he has refused to lose himself in any attempt to summarize the bulky volumes of Frazer's *Golden Bough*, or to determine whether the anthropologist or the psychologist has been chiefly responsible for the interest shown in myth and legend by modern writers. He has cheerfully forgone a magnificent opportunity for ' damnable iteration ' by dismissing Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* as beyond the scope of his inquiry; and has carefully pushed T. S. Eliot and all modern poets to one side in order to free himself from any need to discuss poetic symbolism. May it be a long time before New Zealand's scholars and critics feel the urge to imitate the activities of the historically-minded, statistically-bent, monumentally-inclined literary research workers who do their level best to drain literature of its humanity.

Professor Musgrove's principal reason for turning to anthropological

themes (and because it coincides with my own I cannot do other than applaud) is because he is interested in the search of the creative writer for a mythological framework which is able to include a sense of the past with an awareness of the present, a framework which will allow him to present man as an individual, as a social being, and as heir to the primitive terrors and rhythms of life. There was a time when the human pilgrimage could find artistic form in a pagan or a Christian mythology, in the wanderings of Odysseus or in the search for the Holy Grael. The modern writer has no such means at his disposal. He has no framework of myth which can be easily recognized by his readers and through which he can communicate to them his vision of the meaning and purpose of life.

This is one of the reasons why the findings of the anthropologists and the psychologists have such an attraction for modern novelists. Although Professor Musgrove discusses a number of books more or less from this point of view, I think it is true to say that he finds little support for the idea that anthropological material has yet been used to any great advantage, or, indeed, even to suggest that it can ever be used successfully in order to solve some of the problems connected with the search for form. It is very unlikely that many readers will come to believe in history as a pattern of recurring myths in the same way as, in the past, they have believed in the Christian mythology; and Professor Musgrove succeeds in showing that the use of anthropological material has the tendency to destroy the human interest of the novel.

After several readings of Professor Musgrove's essay, and after considering my recollections of the books with which he deals, I am tempted to say that those writers are most successful in their treatment of such themes who introduce them with becoming flippancy in the manner of James Branch Cabell or Norman Douglas. Thomas Mann, Naomi Mitcheson, Robert Graves, and D. H. Lawrence, to mention a few of the novelists touched on by Professor Musgrove, treat their material with considerable earnestness; but I doubt very much whether many of their readers are willing to follow the complexities of their thought and the patterns of the myths which they use with varying degrees of skill. It is, however, in his slight discussions of books by these writers and by others more recent that Professor Musgrove has offered suggestive comments which may be elaborated with ponderous zeal by the heavyweights, but accepted by most of us with a gratefulness that accords well with his purpose.

H. Winston Rhodes

THE TREATY OF WAITANGI AND THE ACQUISITION OF BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY IN NEW ZEALAND, 1840. J. Rutherford. *Auckland University College* (*Bulletin No.* 36, *History Series No.* 3). 2s. 6d.

MOST New Zealanders begin at an early age to hear of the treaty of Waitangi, and many of them must at one time or another have read the text of the treaty. It must have been a shock to most readers of Dr N. A. Foden's *Constitutional Development of New Zealand in the First Decade,* 1839-1849, to

find how little significance the New Zealand law courts attach to the treaty and a surprise to see the acquisition of New Zealand dated from the issue on 15 June 1839 of Letters Patent under the Great Seal altering the definition of the boundaries of New South Wales. Dr Foden wrote as a lawyer, not as a historian, and performed a useful service in questioning the historical, or perhaps one should say the legendary, valuation of the treaty; but it was time that his argument was subjected to a critical historical examination. This is the main purpose of Professor Rutherford's pamphlet.

Professor Rutherford concedes some of Dr Foden's points. The Treaty of Waitangi is not a treaty recognizable as such in international law, nor is it part of the municipal law of New Zealand; and 'technically, i.e., for purely legal purposes, New Zealand must be placed in the category of colonies acquired by settlement.' But on many points, particularly on the more positive side of Dr Foden's argument, he sums up, it would seem with reason, against Dr Foden. Dr Foden's book offended against what may surely be called a legal as well as a historical principle: he did not take into account all the relevant evidence. Much of this is to be found in the published and unpublished Colonial Office records in London, though it is not Dr Foden's fault that the New Zealand Government does not follow the example of Canada and have these transcribed for the Dominion Archives. These records bring out quite clearly the political value which the British Government attached to the consent of the Maoris to British sovereignty, and consequently to the treaty; and, as Dr Rutherford adds, 'if one recognizes that some violence was done to Colonial Office policy in putting it into the narrow available legal forms, how much further violence may be done by seeking to deduce from the imperfect legal documents exclusively, what those original intentions were?' The Letters Patent of June 1839 were 'an ingenious device to overcome a technical difficulty in the creation of a new colony in a remote part of the world without conceding representative institutions, and to provide for a legislative power in New Zealand from the moment of its acquisition.' 'The definitive acts of State,' Dr Rutherford concludes, 'are Hobson's proclamations of 21 May 1840 and H.M. Government's approval of 2 October 1840.'

The treaty of Waitangi is by no means dead history in New Zealand, especially with the Maori proportion of the population increasing. If the treaty is not part of New Zealand law, should it—or could it—be made so? The questions debated by Dr Rutherford and Dr Foden may excite further controversy; but in the meantime Dr Rutherford's summing up seems, to the reviewer at least, to hold the field.

W. P. Morrell

KIWI, 1948. Edited by Maurice Duggan. *Students' Association, Auckland University College.* 2s. 6d.

HILLTOP. A LITERARY PAPER. Edited by J. M. Thomson. *Literary Society, Victoria University College. Vol. I, nos.* 1 *and* 2. April and June 1949. 10s. a year.

BOOKIE. A NEW MISCELLANY. *The Nag's Head Press, Christchurch.* No. 1. March 1948. 5s.

UNIVERSITY magazines in New Zealand have always had a rather special function. Often enough, they have been almost the only journals publishing serious poems or stories. Has the feeling been that these things are well enough as an intellectual exercise during adolescence, but should not be prolonged once the time has come to put away childish things, and settle down to the serious business of life? The student who develops a talent for football is, of course, better catered for once he leaves the University. The result has been that graduates have occasionally continued to send contributions to University magazines long after ceasing to be students. It has been left to the editor of the 1948 *Kiwi* to carry this a step further. Only a few of his contributors are undergraduates, and several have had no connection with Auckland University College at all. The editor defends this policy on the grounds that 'in the proper hierarchy of society the University sodality and the artists (of all kinds) should find themselves rubbing shoulders and comparing notes.' It seems a little hard, however, on the student that he should lose the opportunity of trying his fledgling wings as a writer without being overshadowed by the literary eagles. There would seem to be room for two periodicals in the University. At Victoria, accordingly, there is being published, alongside the annual magazine, a quarterly, *Hilltop*, which solicits contributions from any source, inside the University or without, and is prepared, moreover, to pay for them. The College Literary Society is to be congratulated on an excellent idea, which should benefit both the University and New Zealand literature in general.

In *Kiwi*, 1948, and in the first two numbers of *Hilltop*, we have a fair selection of current New Zealand writing. In both there is a welcome plenty of short stories and of poetry. Of *Kiwi's* ninety-seven pages, over fifty are devoted to stories, and only about twenty to articles—nine stories to three articles and an editorial. There are poems from twelve contributors. *Hilltop* No. 1 has five stories, thirty-four poems (by eight authors), and two articles, as well as book reviews and film notes. No. 2 has only one story, to four articles; but eighteen of its thirty-eight pages are taken up with poems, and the book and film reviews have been dropped. The emphasis, then, is on original creative writing. The preoccupation with politics and economics, so noticeable before the war, seems to have passed. The second *Hilltop* has an editorial opposing conscription (the tone is temperate and reasoned: unlike a previous generation, they speak more in sorrow than in anger) but for the most part these writers concern themselves with modern trends in architecture, with the poems of Ronsard or of Gerard Manley Hopkins, with the marionette theatre or with the nature of aesthetic values. This is not merely a retreat into the ivory tower. 'The chief problem of our age,' says Dr Peter Munz (in *Hilltop* No. 2) 'seems to be our disillusionment and scepticism.' The search is still for a faith; but it is being sought apparently, in philosophy or aesthetics or religion rather than in politics. There is only Mr J. W. Winchester, rebuking

M. H. Holcroft for ignoring 'the class structure of New Zealand' and 'the roots of Socialist thinking,' to raise a voice from the lavender-scented past.

The stories are all competent without being outstanding. I liked best Brian Sutton-Smith's *Before the Jubilee* (*Hilltop* No. 2), W. O. Droescher's *Luscious Dahlias* and John Kelly's *Tangi* (*Kiwi*). Mr Sutton-Smith is the most successful of the three or four writers who have attempted humour, Mr Kelly of the three or four who recapture childhood experiences. W. O. Droescher gives us in two pages a neat character sketch which also conveys a comment on the New Zealand way of life. These writers know exactly what they are trying to do, and they do not try to do too much. Most of the others are straining after a deeper significance, with varying degrees of success.

Among the poets there are some familiar names: Denis Glover, A. R. D. Fairburn, Charles Brasch, James Baxter, Kendrick Smithyman. (The last two figure in both *Kiwi* and *Hilltop*.) But there are also many less familiar, most of them, one gathers, belonging to a younger generation. Poetry, it seems, is not likely to die out. Again, one's general impression is of competence. *Kiwi* is not afraid to include some satirical verse, but here there seem to be no new discoveries, unless one includes Professor Musgrove, who has two neat epigrams; the other satirists are Mr Fairburn and Mr Glover. I liked particularly Mr Fairburn's semi-pun on the late Director of Broadcasting. It is hardly possible to deal with the serious poems without a detailed discussion of each, for which there is no space; but I should like to mention James Baxter's *To my Father*, which treats a difficult theme without mawkishness, and at the same time gives a clear impression of character.

Bookie is something new in New Zealand literature: the elaborate squib or parody. The name is, of course, meant to recall *Book*; and the whole publication is aimed at the Caxton Press and those who write for it. A kind of mythology is created, centring round the Nag's Head Press, devoted principally, it would seem, to the literature of horse-racing. It is all done with great zest, and there is some excellent parody (some of it typographical); but the jest inevitably becomes a little wearisome. I liked particularly the *Barnego Flat Ballads*, complete with pedantic footnotes. Two stanzas from it may give some idea of the elaborate family joke which *Bookie* is.

> 'Call up my shearers all!' he cried
> 'Call up my shearers three!'
> His rabbiters came up as well
> And they were fifty-three . . .
>
> Nor did he dream the black bush stream
> Was deepening by degrees—
> The waiting hills were up ahead;
> Beyond, the encircling seas . . .

D. H. Monro

Publications Received

J. C. Beaglehole. *Victoria University College. An essay towards a history.* New Zealand University Press. 15s.

The Old Clay Patch. Verses written in and around Victoria University College. Third Edition, 1949. New Zealand University Press.

John Mulgan. *Man Alone.* Second edition, 1949. Paul's Book Arcade. 10s. 6d.

Canterbury Lambs. No. 3. Edited by James K. Baxter. The Canterbury College Literary Club.

R.G.H. *Involuntaries.* Angus and Robertson. 7s. 6d.

The Journey. A play created by a group in Community House, Glasgow, under the direction of Oliver Marlow Wilkinson. Religious Drama Society. 2s. 6d.

Lillian Everts. *Lost Edition* (Lantern Award for a Poem of World Significance). Lillian Everts, 187 Hicks St, Brooklyn 2, New York. $1.

Notes on Contributors

D. M. ANDERSON. Born in Invercargill, 1923, but has lived mainly in Balclutha and Dunedin. At present Ross Fellow of Knox College. Has had articles or stories in *Book*, *Speaking for Ourselves*, *Canterbury Lambs*, and *The Southland Times*.

ALISTAIR CAMPBELL. Born in Rarotonga, 1926. Came to New Zealand in 1934. Educated at Otago Boys' High School and Victoria College. Now living in Wellington.

S. B. MACLENNAN. Practising artist in water colour, lithography and wood engraving. Trained at the Dunedin School of Art, and the Royal College of Art and the Central School of Art and Craft in London. Director, National Art Gallery, Wellington.

LAWRENCE ROBINSON. Born in Christchurch, 1927. At present employed as a clerk in the New Zealand National Airways Corporation.

MERVYN TAYLOR. Born in Auckland 1906. Jewellery engraver until the depression. Became a commercial artist and moved to Wellington. During the war worked with Army Education and Welfare Service. Later Art Editor and illustrator with School Publications; since July 1946 free lancing. His wood engravings have appeared in *Korero*, the *School Journal*, *Book*, *The Arts in New Zealand*, *Arts Year Book*, and *The Studio*, as well as in *Taina*, by G. M. Henderson, *Shadow of the Flame*, by Hubert Witheford, and his own *Book of Wood Engravings*.

NOTES

I

THE figure of Goethe has one point of significance which has not been so clear before as it is now, two hundred years after his birth.

The deepest question that faces the West to-day is, can Western man go on living without Christianity, or rather outside or beyond Christianity in the forms in which we know it. The indefinable faith in life which is the dynamic of all higher civilizations was given to Western man by Christianity, in the name of which he created (and was created by) the civilization of Europe and carried it over the world. But for nearly a century he has been perceptibly losing that faith. Can he recover and maintain it, possibly in some altered guise, without ' returning to Christianity ' in any sense that means turning back, turning away, and yet without discarding it (which would only be another and more certainly disastrous form of turning back)? For if he cannot, it seems improbable that what we mean by the West will survive; and although Toynbee thinks that civilizations may be merely servants or midwives to religion and thus have no intrinsic value, no individual necessity, it is at least arguable that in fact religion and civilization are so closely interdependent that higher forms of the one cannot arise or survive except in association with higher forms of the other.

Goethe is a witness to suggest that Western man *can* recover faith in life; the greatest witness, and perhaps the sole unambiguous, at all convincing one. Goethe is not to be dismissed as ' post-Christian ' in the usual meaning of the phrase. He did not shed Christianity like an old skin and leave it behind him, on the contrary he studied and revered it all his life; but he did not pretend to think that after a mere eighteen centuries it had said the last word in interpretation of God and the world, or its own last word. He saw it as one of many human creations which embody divine revelation, no one of which in the nature of things can ever be comprehensive or final; and he expected it to grow and change as he saw all living organisms growing and changing.

Throughout an amazingly rich and many-sided life, both practical and intellectual, Goethe was deeply involved in his age,

as fully *engagé* as the school of Sartre could demand (this is not to forget the issues from which he stood aside); yet as he recedes from us in time he seems to foreshadow the future still more than to sum up and embody the past. In a very striking way he appears as an heir, not only of a paganism which was long dead, but of the Christianity of his own and earlier ages. It is as if he were looking back upon both worlds, Christian and classical, from a later epoch and out of a different culture, undergoing their diverse influences, religious, humane, scientific, experiencing their depths of meaning and their inexhaustible profundity and pertinence for mankind, yet seeing both alike in history and as history, as the work of many generations of men divinely gifted and humanly erring.

While he was steeped in Christian feeling and doctrine he was no less a pantheist; Schweitzer has remarked on the way in which he unites pantheism and Christianity. His deep and strong religious sense made him impatient with much in orthodox Christianity, Protestant and Catholic alike. What he rejected in it he rejected because it seemed to him a restriction on and a denial of life.

For it was with life, the business of living, attitudes towards living, that he was concerned above all. Although convinced of the soul's immortality, he believed that men can best fit themselves for what is to come by participation in the affairs of this world and should therefore not be preoccupied overmuch with the after life. 'I am heartily sorry,' he said, 'for those persons who are constantly talking of the perishable nature of things, and the nothingness of human life; for that is exactly why we are here, to stamp the perishable with an imperishable worth; and we can only do so by taking a just estimate of both.'

He lived for his own eighty two years as fully as any man we know of; and the sense that his work gives is always of the endless richness and interest of life. Passionate as he was he was able to control his passion and prevent its burning him up; extreme as were (on the negative side) his moodiness and impressionability, his irresolution, his sense of guilt, his pain, his despair, even his longing for death, he was able to master them; he was ready to experience everything, but he wanted to live on enriched by his experience. *Werther* shows that he knew the impulse to founder, the urge towards self-destruction, as well as any writer before or

since; and he allowed it its place; but his instinct to survive was deeper. ' He did not foresee the coming, in the century after him, of a point of view that would have preferred to have him go to pieces at all costs like a good poet rather than make a success of things, and if he had foreseen it there was something in him, fortunately, that would have rejected it. For if the impulse to survive is more valuable to humanity than the impulse to perish, then the life and work of Goethe, as we now have it, means more than it could possibly have meant if he had crumpled under the pressure of himself or failed to do what he did.' So Barker Fairley in his fine *Study of Goethe* (1947), which is also a notable tract for the times.

The effect of Goethe as we read his work or read about him is to persuade us that life is richer and more rewarding than we had been aware, and to heighten our own sense of it; his energy and passion and wonder and humility and patience are infectious. He is the only great European writer outside or beyond Christianity who communicates at all comprehensively this sense of life which is the impulse of every culture. Most writers who have turned their backs on Christianity have had little or nothing positive to offer in its place. One can think of partial exceptions—Whitman, Yeats, D. H. Lawrence, for example—but their world-views soon come to seem narrow and constricting; and few others have been able to offer even so much hope as they. Yet what Christian writer since Goethe has given men any sense comparable to his of the greatness and goodness of life—life as a divine gift, of the value of human striving, the rightness of the whole immense complex effort of civilization? Who can inspire them as he can with the will and courage to go on, the hope of making something of the world after all, in spite of weakness and error and guilt? Christian writers—novelists, poets, philosophers—have been for the most part as world-weary as non-Christian ones, more aware of sin and pain, of difficulty and doubt, than of energy and hope and perseverance.

It would of course be foolish to see Goethe as the representative of some abstract ' religion of the future ' which is to take the place of the living (or dying) religions of to-day, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and the rest. For one thing, his beliefs were personal and he did not ask other people to share them: ' Religion, properly so called, is always a matter of the inner man, and a thing specially

belonging to the individual.' And he was no systematizer; he remained in uncertainty about many things, and would probably not have quarrelled with Schweitzer's judgment of his view of the world as 'magnificently imperfect.' The kind of reassurance his life and work offers is different. 'Whoever has truly grasped the meaning of history,' he wrote, 'will realize in thousands of examples that the materialization of the spirit or the spiritualization of matter never rests, but always breaks out, among prophets, believers, poets, orators, artists, and lovers of art.' And Eckermann reports him saying, shortly before his death, 'as soon as the pure doctrine and love of Christ are comprehended in their true nature, and have become a vital principle, we shall feel ourselves as human beings, great and free, and not attach special importance to a degree more or less in the outward forms of religion. Besides, we shall all gradually advance from a Christianity of words and faith, to a Christianity of feeling and action.' And (a passage strikingly reminiscent of Keats's letter about 'the vale of Soulmaking'), 'It would have been for God a poor occupation to compose this heavy world out of simple elements, and to keep it rolling in the sunbeams from year to year, if He had not had the plan of founding a nursery for a world of spirits upon this material basis.'

II

AT THE end of August, the Minister of Internal Affairs reviewed the work of the Committee of the State Literary Fund in the first two years of its existence. His statement was reported in the newspapers. The list of grants which the Committee has made includes subsidies towards the publication of new books and reprints, and grants for 'study and work in progress.'

Whether all the books mentioned deserve subsidizing may be questioned. In matters of this kind differences of opinion are inevitable, and mistakes are bound to be made from time to time. What is important is that the Committee should set a high standard, and establish the Fund's name as a useful and reputable aid to literature and historical study, and not just a machine for making indiscriminate hand-outs to doughy novels about the pioneers and earnest chroniclers of Little Whakapungapunga and the Gestes of the Rabbiters.

Mr Parry remarked fairly enough that the Committee's work could not be spectacular. Yet if successive governments are to maintain the Fund, the Committee must win a reputation for good judgment, and be able to point to a growing list of valuable books which might not have been published without it, and to serious writers whose work its help has benefited. Otherwise it will be axed as a wasteful luxury at the first sign of a ' recession '; and not without reason.

One point concerning reprints. These are presumably being subsidized as standard works, that is, books which the public, and not only the libraries, should be able to afford. John Mulgan's *Man Alone*, the first of these reprints to appear, costs 10s. 6d., which for a short novel would be very dear even if it were a new one. There are not so many works which deserve subsidizing in this way, and they should be subsidized adequately, that is, so that they can be sold at a reasonable price, even if it means that fewer grants can be made in the same year.

III

As this number goes to press, a new monthly has made its appearance in Auckland. As an independent journal for the ' free discussion of politics, literature, art and public affairs ' (to quote its first editorial), in a country where there have been no independent journals (except quarterlies) since *Tomorrow* died in doubtful circumstances in 1940, *Here and Now* has a fine opportunity. One of New Zealand's greatest needs is a body of informed and responsible public opinion to maintain a high standard of public life. In England and the United States the better weeklies play an essential part in forming such opinion, and if *Here and Now* can do something similar here it will deserve well of the country.

LINES IN AUTUMN : A POEM BY BASIL DOWLING

Brown and bronze and yellow
From poplar, birch, and willow
The fainting leaves drift down and gleam
Coins on the grass and goldfish in the stream.

Berries crimson and jet
On bush and bough are set,
And holly sprigs their own blood lend
When reaching up for them I prick my hand.

Footprints of child and lover
Will soon be frozen over,
And bellbirds will no longer chime
From their deserted chapels mossed with rime.

Yet for a tremulous while
Autumnal scenes beguile
Hearts that have known the wintry hour
When stricken joys fall from them in a shower.

Handwriting by Leo Bensemann

Ruth Dallas

The World's Centre

THE circle will remain, of mountain, hill
And curving sea that once enclosed the world,
And winds that smell and taste of the sea and shake
The needles from the pines with the sea's anger,
And great skies, and rivers blue as veins.

It is this landscape with the children walking
Small as starlings down beside the river,
And with the solitary small white launch
Like a folded gull, this bleak with water
Flax and tussock landscape that is passing.

This wilderness was pond and open flower,
The world's centre once, with nothing strange
In flax or tussock then, in trees all year
Carrying their leaves on stooping shoulders;
But moves further away as one grows older.

The pines along the yellow bank have turned
From cold sea winds towards the houses coming
Over the hills, the world that will not listen
To what the wind is saying and the water;
Soon the little trees, and flax, will follow.

All that once was here for ever seems
Hurrying away to be a tale
Told on a sunny doorstep, like the tales
Old men tell of vanished bush and mill,
That only children listen to and ponder.

Charles Brasch

The Ruins

I HAVE seen them still and clear in the bareness of dawn,
Strong hulls of shadow by no sunlight feigned.
I have watched them troubling the wind, rooted, opaque.
Air was about them; a dead leaf from their ivies
Rustling freed itself and fell coldly;
Trees kept their appointed distance, grasses,
These grasses I touch now,
Knelt softly against the bruised face of the stone,
And birds in early wide-eyed flight
Skirted them as though making their constant passage.
Yet there is nothing here, nothing but the grasses
Of a level space open to the sea's quiet.

Can it be that what is to come is already here,
That the preparations are made, and what they point to
By some happy conjunction
May become visible and seem even now to be?
That the air makes advances, drawing on the future
For a few clairvoyant moments, to load
Some artless plot of earth with burdens
That time lays up for it, and that the mind
Inexplicably sharpened may perceive
Through the loud deliverances of sense
Other shapes and workings, the undreamed of issue
Of currents unmarked or misconstrued?

But it is seldom that time opens unguarded
Or that I am able to see,
For if I look and wait there is only the careless now.
So this mild afternoon
The level space lies innocent, no walls
Lift up serpent wreaths of ivies
That bind their stones in a knot of death,
The wind flows unparted
Where I shall always see them cleaving it,
And sinks into the distance, or turns away
Into another era,
And is lost, lost in the sea's quiet.

N. C. Phillips

The Referendum: A Retrospect

I

TWICE within a few months of this year representative government has deferred to direct democracy, and the voice of the sovereign people of New Zealand has spoken, once on the licensing and gaming laws, and once on compulsory military training; and by the time this article is read, the electors, making their third visit to the polls within the year, will have chosen a Government. It is not often in this country that a popular vote is taken at such short intervals, but it would be hazardous to draw the inference usually suggested by the frequent resort to referenda—that there is disillusionment and dissatisfaction with the working of representative institutions. The first referendum of the year introduced no innovation of principle. New Zealanders have long kept their liquor and politics in separate spheres, and have preferred to decide for themselves on the right to drink. Since 1896 local licensing polls have been held concurrently with General Elections, and since 1911, with one exception, each General Election has been the occasion of a national referendum on prohibition. The referendum of March did no more than apply the same principle to betting on horse-races. The referendum on military training, however, raises or illuminates issues of greater pith and moment. Laying aside the rights and wrongs of compulsory military service, I should like to discuss three other questions as highly significant incidents of the main issue—the circumstances in which the decision to hold a referendum was made; the wisdom of that decision; and the conduct of the referendum.

The facts may be briefly recalled. In February, the caucus of the Government party established a committee on national defence. After holding six meetings, at which, presumably, it heard reports by the Prime Minister on the defence discussions of two meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London, the committee reported back to the caucus in May. On receiving the report, the caucus approved, with one dissentient, a series of resolutions

for submission to the annual conference of the Labour Party, one of which invited the conference to request the Government to 'use all the resources of the country, including compulsory national service, if the Government, after exploring all possibilities and alternatives, is convinced that such a measure is essential for the defence and preservation of our people, our country and our Commonwealth'. When the party conference met shortly afterwards, this recommendation was attacked by certain non-parliamentary members of the party, and after a long debate the Prime Minister intervened with an amendment to refer the introduction of national service to popular vote. This suggestion was adopted by an overwhelming majority. Though the original resolutions had been designed as part of the Labour platform for the General Election, then six months away, and though, after the party conference, the Prime Minister was reported as having confirmed that a referendum would be held only if the Government deemed it necessary, a month later he announced concrete plans for military training, and on 1 July the House of Representatives passed the Military Training Bill. Early the next month, more than three-quarters of the voters in the referendum authorized the Government to proceed with compulsory military training.*

II

The true genesis of the melancholy sequence which soon began to unfold itself was a failure of leadership, the failure of the Government to act without further prompting upon a decision which the fullest information and the best wisdom at its command had convinced it, or was to convince it, to be necessary. This failure, I shall argue, sprang from a false notion of the relations of Government and party. Clearly, it had always been the intention of the Government to secure the approval of the party for its policy. A decision was made by the Cabinet; it won the almost unanimous assent of the parliamentary caucus; all that was lacking was the concurrence of the party in the country, as represented at its annual conference. Beyond that, the Government did not seek authorization. Formally, to be sure, the issue was to be put

*This information is derived from newspaper reports, and particularly the report on the Labour Party conference, which was supplied to the press by the party.

to the judgment of the whole electorate, as a plank in the party platform; but formally and no more, since, with the Opposition declaring its support of national service, the General Election could give no guidance to the feeling of the country on the subject. As a result of opposition, possibly by a small minority, at the party conference, the plan miscarried, or was abandoned, and Mr Fraser moved the compromise resolution reluctantly, but in preference to the prospect of leading a divided party in the General Election. He treated his ills by the homoeopathic method; the ills he had incurred by requiring a party mandate would yield only to the stronger dose of a national mandate. Or, to change the figure, the Government permitted the party to persuade it to invoke the country as arbiter in its party domestic quarrels. It was not that the party agreed about the virtues of the public voice, but that it disagreed about the virtues of conscription; and it referred its disagreement to the umpirage of the nation. Having failed to secure the sanction of unanimity within the party, the Government resolved to secure the sanction of a majority in the country. How far that resolve was to prove compatible with the equitable conduct of the referendum will appear later.

Constitutionally, the peculiar interest of this incident is that while, on the one hand, it confirmed the well-marked tendency to diminish the stature of the legislative assembly, on the other hand, it reversed, or halted, the tendency to exalt the caucus into the *primum mobile* of government. The process of democratic government is a collusive one, in which there is a nice division of labour among its various organs—the electorate, Parliament, the Cabinet, the caucus and the parties. When government is stable, each of these organs respects what is held at the time to be the proper role of the others; but when one or more of them encroaches upon the province of the rest, the balance of power in the political system is shifting and the character of government is undergoing a change. This, I hasten to add, is not necessarily an unhealthy development; on the contrary, it is an inevitable development. Change is the one unchanging certainty, and it is only a philosopher's dream—and, to many, a bad one at that—to immobilize and arrest a political system in the instant of its supposed perfection.

But we should not be deceived about the nature of the change

that is taking place. Superficially, the majesty of the enfranchised people has been vindicated; in fact (if we confine ourselves to this incident alone), the triumph lies with the party outside Parliament, and the interests which it represents, at the expense of the other co-operating organs of government. This, it may be said, is wholly salutary. The electorate is an amorphous inarticulate mass; it can report its experience and speak its opinions only in the cadres of a party machine, which listens to a thousand private whispers and transmutes them into a single, plain, unambiguous voice. Insulate the Government from the cautionary or hortatory accents of that voice, and responsibility dwindles into a merely formal rendering of accounts every three years. Government should be under the continuous tutelage of those who have empowered it to govern, and it is only through the activities of the local branches of parties, culminating in national conferences, that this tutelage can be made effective. It is the party's task to disturb the conservatism of those comfortably *in situ*, to re-introduce them to their promises and their ideals, to transmit fresh initiatives—in short, to keep the channels of assent open and the stream of confidence flowing freely upwards. So much is true. But this truth has a converse which should not be ignored. A Government, indeed, is elected on a published party programme, from which it may not lightly depart; but, once it is elected, it becomes the Government not of a party but of a people, and its Ministers become not the *élite* of a faction but the King's Ministers. The non-partisan Crown, in whose name the Government transacts its business, is not an empty symbol, but a continuing reminder that those entrusted with power should exercise it in the interest of the whole nation. It is the duty of every democratic Government to balance its allegiance to a party creed and policy against its responsibility for the national welfare, and to temper the wind of a victorious majority to the shorn lamb of a defeated minority. 'No spoils' has its counterpart in 'no reprisals'. By the same token, it is for the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition and his followers to stop short at the point where dissent descends into narrow intransigence. In striking such balances, there is, of course, no sovereign guide. Democracy is a hard task-master; it demands experience no less than good will, and asks of its exponents a delicate sense of the 'spirit of the laws'. It requires of its Governments respect for the dualism of their status, half counsel,

half judge. A Government which skips too nimbly to the tune of its party will soon find itself in danger of forfeiting its public character; it will be tempted to treat office as a little temporary property, to be exploited for the benefit of its partisans; it will incite its opponents to do the same; and the measured tread of national progress will lose its continuity. The danger is patently the greater where the 'party' may be resolved into a small but energetic minority of those who vote with it at the polls, and greater still where a numerically insignificant minority assumes disproportionate weight because of the even strength of parties.

The substance of my contention is that the Government was diverted from its considered course by dissent within the party; it took a decision—to hold a referendum—which it would not otherwise have taken. And the argument stands, regardless of the nature of that decision. It is not, therefore, strictly necessary to answer the objection that the Government deferred to the will, not of the party, but of the country, but the objection is worth a moment's examination. The party, it may be said, in so far as it imposed its will at all, imposed it only in order to appeal to the yet higher will of the whole electorate; and even if the party were to represent only a minority of the population, there is a good precedent for its action in countries of irreproachable democratic tradition. In more than one country, the right to demand a referendum is conceded to small minorities—in the Swiss cantons, for example, to proportions varying between eight and twenty per cent. Why should New Zealanders cavil at this thoroughly well-accredited practice? The reply is clearly that it would be inappropriate to justify the action of a political group in New Zealand by the example of Swiss or any other foreign democracy. The analogy is enfeebled by the wide disparity not only between the New Zealand and Swiss environments, geographical and historical, but also between the two political systems. The initiative and referendum have long been established institutions in Switzerland, where they find a rationale, which they lack in New Zealand, in the inability of the elected assembly to remove the executive before its term of office expires. Where public opinion cannot press indirectly through the legislature for the supervision of a Government, there may be a sound reason for enabling it to press directly by way of initiative and referendum.

III

In choosing the referendum as a refuge from party discord, the Government involved itself in further unfortunate consequences, for it chose a device generally unsuited to political conditions in this country, and particularly inapt for obtaining a popular verdict when the facts upon which to found an opinion are largely confidential.

Until this year, the referendum has had little or no place in the New Zealand polity except as a means of deciding non-political issues. Elsewhere, political questions have been submitted to two types of referendum, the constitutional and the legislative. In countries possessing a rigid Constitution—usually, though not necessarily, a consequence of their federal structure—it is often obligatory to obtain electoral sanction for constitutional amendments, as in Australia and Switzerland. In the United States, popular vote is one method by which such amendments may be ratified, though in fact only the Twenty-first Amendment, repealing national prohibition, has been so ratified. Referenda of this type seem inapplicable to countries with a flexible Constitution like New Zealand's. Regular provision is sometimes made for the referendum on ordinary legislation, again in the cantons and confederation of Switzerland and in some States of the American Union, but in neither the American nor the Australian Federation. The device was adopted also in the Constitutions of some of the European States which arose or were reorganized after the First World War. In this last case, the experiment was hardly reassuring, and where the referendum has proved satisfactory, the structure of government has differed from that in Britain and the Dominions on the cardinal point of the relations of executive and legislature. It would be too much to say, perhaps, that in no circumstances could a country like New Zealand make profitable use of the referendum on party-political questions, but the weight of the evidence is strongly against the proposition that it is of much value and strongly in favour of the proposition that it has inherent dangers. What, then, are the demerits of the referendum in this country?

Generally, it is alien to the genius of our institutions, which have developed historically not by a cession upwards of an original popular power, but by tempering in the popular interest an

original monarchical power. English government has for many centuries been strong, centralized government, with the Crown pumping out impulses through the body politic;* and when we say that it has become democratized, we mean that larger and larger numbers of citizens have been admitted to a share in the task of limiting, guiding, restraining or inspiring the operations of the Crown. But government has always been from above; what has come from below is assent or dissent, which has been made increasingly more potent. By contrast, there is the French tradition, which is based on the revolutionary dogma of popular sovereignty, and which finds its institutional expression in the hapless preoccupation of government by assembly. Now the referendum sorts ill with a system such as ours, in which the initiative emanates from the summit of affairs, and in which a Government, elected to govern, is allowed (within the limits of its electoral pledges) the free exercise of its own judgment, always subject to the pains and penalties which may be inflicted at the end of its stewardship. In such a system, recourse to referenda should be unnecessary or quite exceptional. When it chooses between two potential Governments, the electorate is well aware of the kind of service it will get; it is familiar with the brand of politics offered to it by its suitors, and it knows that one party will drive this particular 'stream of tendency' through its administration, and that the other will drive that. Having made its major choice, it must be content to have minor choices made for it. No Government can stand perpetually on trial, and it is obvious that none will ever have majority approval for *all* its decisions. A General Election is, in fact, a *general* election. The wisdom of confining the popular option to the election of members of Parliament is that it asks the voter no question which he may not realistically be expected to answer. A referendum, on the other hand, asks the voter a question either so precise in its details that he is not qualified to answer it, or so broad in its phrasing that his verdict is meaningless. The referendum of August is a case in point. The opponents of conscription complained that the terms of the ballot-paper conferred a blank cheque upon the Government; the Government replied that it had made its

*Like most generalizations, this needs to be qualified in detail, but it remains broadly true even of periods when central control slackened, as between the Whig Revolution of 1688-9 and the thirties of last century.

proposals quite clear. But are we really to imagine that any responsible Government would bind itself to carry into effect an exact plan, no more and no less, a plan, moreover, which, having been sanctioned by popular ballot, would require to be amended by a further popular ballot? That is to say, those who demanded a referendum secured the only possible kind of referendum, one couched in broad permissive terms.

The referendum is sometimes defended as the only means of obtaining a plain answer to a plain question. General Elections, so the argument runs, constitute a judgment on the record of a Government; and it is impossible to detach retrospective praise or censure from the verdict of the voters on the policies put before them. Even if it is charitably assumed that the voters confer a mandate for the execution of a policy, mandates are likely to become obsolete, and when new and unforeseen issues arise, the only satisfactory method of testing opinion on them is to refer them specifically to the people. This reasoning presupposes the possibility of isolating issues for decision. But, as we have seen, the plain question may be so very plain as to take on material significance only when it is interpreted, and it must be for the Government to interpret it. Furthermore, it is not easy in practice to sustain the pristine clarity of an issue. Where, for example, a proposal is sponsored by the Government and resisted by the Opposition, it will often be decided by party loyalties, rather than on its merits. But even where the two great parties in the State are in agreement, irrelevancies will keep breaking in, and controversy will stir up the sediment of side issues, clouding the elector's vision and adulterating his judgment. Who can say with confidence what considerations were proper to the referendum on military training? There were those who voted 'Yes' because they had noticed that the Communists were preparing to vote 'No'; there were those who voted 'No' because they had been persuaded to fear the use of conscripted troops in breaking strikes, and the Government's proposal has even been seen as security for a forthcoming dollar loan. Perhaps any or all of these considerations are relevant. But the line of relevance is at best speculative, and it is the business of publicists so to draw it as to include much that is merely irrational.

Another palpable disadvantage of the resort to referenda is that it makes of the purgative medicine of the Constitution its

daily bread. The voice of the people owes much of its solemnity to the fact that it speaks rarely; when it becomes garrulous, it becomes cheap, and this is apt to be especially true in a country where the life of Parliament is limited to three years. Frequent polling, again, is likely to blunt rather than to sharpen the electorate's relish for politics, as revealed in the proportion of those who exercise their vote. In this respect, New Zealand has an enviable reputation in its national politics, and the incidence of non-voting has of recent years been almost negligible. In the election of 1946 more than ninety-three per cent. of the registered voters went to the polls, but in the referendum of August, the proportion fell to about sixty-five per cent. It is, therefore, conceivable that the question should have been decided by a third of the voting population, and in fact it was decided at best by a bare majority.*

Can it be said, then, that military training, like licensing and gaming, is a strictly non-partisan matter, and, as such, appropriate for decision by other than the normal political machinery of Cabinet initiative and parliamentary enactment? Is it an *enfant terrible* to be snatched from the party lap and deposited on the citizen's doorstep? Now the introduction of compulsory national service in peace-time involves the fundamentals of political thinking. However much we should like to pass it off on the plane of expedients, it insists on being treated on the plane of principles. In the political creed, it hardly belongs among the matters indifferent. It does not follow, of course, that the two major parties should differ on the principles it raises, but one might reasonably expect to find within any one party a consensus or prevalence of opinion one way or the other. If such a preponderance is absent, or even if it is unable to prevail over a minority which values its dissent highly, then the party is certainly not a party as Burke understood the term—'a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular

*The figure of sixty-five per cent. is approximate only; the true figure may be lower. At the time of writing, the information required for an exact calculation is not available. The *New Zealand Gazette* (25 August, 1949) records the total vote as 729,425 (568,427 for, 160,998 against), but it does not state the number of registered voters. Those entitled to vote in the 1946 election numbered 1,081,898 (App. to Journal of House of Representatives, 1947, H-33).

principle in which they are all agreed '—for it lacks the vivifying and unifying possession of a common political philosophy. In these circumstances, parties expose themselves to the allegation which has sometimes been made against them in New Zealand* —that they are simply constellations of economic interests, appetites in alliance, durable as entities only so long as tactical skill continues to effect the artificial identification of the interests which compose them. Seen from this angle, the appeal to the people as an avenue of escape from domestic party conflict takes on a deeper significance. A party which cannot make up its mind on fundamentals is beginning to lose the attributes and the identity of a party.

Or can it be that it is the very importance of the issue, rather than its non-partisan character, that justifies its reference to the vote of the people? I do not think so. For many important acts of government it may be possible to plead the somewhat dubious defence of the mandate, but for many others no such defence is possible. There was no mandate for the introduction of the ' country quota ' or for its abolition, though these acts made basic constitutional changes. Without mandates democratic governments have applied their authority up to the hilt, nor have they ceased to be democratic in so doing. They have extended the franchise, they have regulated the succession to the throne, they have reversed long-established economic policies, they have prolonged their lives, they have declared war and made peace and they have assumed the overwhelming powers necessary for waging modern war.

At first glance, the referendum has the plausible appearance of being a democratic device. But if second glances are turned towards the technique of dictatorship, and especially to the single-party, totalitarian dictatorship of the twentieth century, the illusion rapidly fades. By comparison with their successors, the plebiscitary dictatorships of the two Napoleons were but feeble exemplars. The referendum, as it operated in Hitlerite Germany, was wholly consonant with the spirit of the régime, and serves to illustrate the abuses to which it *may* be put. When it held a referendum, the Nazi Government was not seeking guidance but applause; its aim was to refresh itself with another

*E.g. by Professor L. Lipson in *The Politics of Equality*.

stimulating draught of popular confidence, and to maintain the feverish momentum of its course, for running a dictatorship is like riding a bicycle—once in the saddle, you must keep going or you fall off. Since their purpose was to give Germans an opportunity to express solidarity with their rulers, the Nazis took elaborate care to stage-manage these demonstrations. The choice fell upon subjects upon which German opinion, even if tepidly Nazi, would be warmly unanimous—the decision to withdraw from the League of Nations, for example, or the annexation of Austria; and the favourable reaction to these particular strokes of policy was construed as general approbation of the régime. Again, the question on the ballot-paper might be so framed as to suggest the required answer; and, apart from the more obvious crudities of a single-party system, of physical intimidation at the polls or of the falsification of results, the referendum was admirably adapted to Nazi propaganda methods. The advantage of a referendum to a propagandist is that it enables him to apply the sound military maxim of concentration of effort. He may mesmerize opinion, so to speak, by compelling it to stare fixedly at a selected object, which he manipulates in order to daze. Note the contrast with the method of a General Election. In an election, a people is asked to give an opinion which it has been able to mature over a long period; it is passing judgment on an administration under which it has lived for years. All this time it has been, consciously or unconsciously, making up its own mind, and all this time it has known that, about a given date, its opinions will be solicited. It has not been (or it need not be) precipitated into a snap decision by a whirlwind campaign, and it has a memory long enough and strong enough to resist, if it so wishes, the pleas and the objurgations of the hustings. We should not expect to exorcise unreason from the politics of democracy; but between the periodical General Election and the occasional referendum there is this difference: that the one minimizes, and the other maximizes, the play of the irrational. It is no cause for surprise that the Nazis assimilated their elections to their referenda.

IV

On the two topics which I have so far discussed, it is possible for men sincere in their democratic professions to reject my

arguments. On the third topic—the conduct of the July referendum—I frankly find it hard to believe that to such persons more than one opinion is available. That opinion may be mildly stated as one of alarm and disapproval. Negatively, the Government, having resolved on a referendum, failed to supply the full and frank information upon which a decision might be based, and asked the electorate to accept in lieu its assurance that conscription was necessary. It sought a verdict from a jury which had not heard all the evidence, except as hearsay. It asked literally for a vote of blind confidence. This, no doubt, was the ineluctable consequence of the decision, made out of deference to party opposition, to hold the referendum, but the implication should not escape notice: the electorate is relegated to the status of the ventriloquist's doll. Electioneers, like Nature, abhor a vacuum; and if the void is not filled by facts, it will be filled by noxious fancies, and all the gags of the manufacturers of mass emotion. Positively, the Government, as a Government, took a stand avowedly partisan. I argued earlier that a Government, as the executive organ of the State, has an obligation to respect the neutrality of its position. In July and August, the Government abdicated its neutrality; so, for that matter, did the Leader of the Opposition, in so far as he campaigned under that style. The Government descended into the lists double-armed against its opponents; for not only did it possess a monopoly of information, which came to it by virtue of its official status, and which it exploited to sustain that one of two possible causes which it favoured, but it also had at its disposal the machinery of the State, of which it is the temporary operative, and which it likewise used to sustain one rather than the other of two possible causes. The proportioning and allocation of broadcasting time, the franking of letters with a campaign slogan, the payment for advertisement in the newspapers—all these flowed from a failure to distinguish between the impartiality of the State, which in democratic countries is expected to be neutral, and the partisanship of the men, however well-informed, who happen for the time being to be charged with the administration of the State. They have the duty to govern and to make the decisions necessary for government. If they will not, or cannot, they are still free, like all other men, to advocate their opinions, and those opinions deserve to be carefully weighed; but, once the State has assumed

the role of referee, it should place its resources at the disposal of competing causes equally or not at all. If, as one believes, partisanship drew the rein at the point described, that is a matter for thankfulness, but not for permanent relief, for there is no logical reason why it should not have cavorted on far beyond. 'Inch by inch' is the classic formula for constitutional subversion, and for the erosion of civil and political liberties. Consider how far the wrong has spread. It was the Treasury which disbursed the taxpayer's money; it was the Post and Telegraph Department which franked the letters and distributed them; it was the Railways Department which transported some of them; it was perhaps the Prime Minister's Department which coined the slogans and drafted the advertisements, or which commissioned a private agency to do so; it was the Broadcasting Service which offered such unequal facilities for publicity. How many other Departments of State were made accessory to this unsavoury fact it is not easy to say; nor is it easy to say why, short of a public outcry, there should be any area of immunity from such usage.

Of the many rueful reflections which this record might prompt I mention only three. First, it was made possible by a mitigation of parliamentary opposition. I say 'mitigation' rather than 'suspension' in recognition of the protest by the Opposition against certain aspects of the broadcasting campaign; but I can find no evidence of their whole-hearted condemnation of the general conduct of the referendum, and to be silent is to condone. 'The best party,' remarked the observant Halifax in the seventeenth century, 'is but a conspiracy against the rest of the nation.' And when two parties combine in such an enterprise, the conspiracy is but magnified. Is it an exaggeration to say that, for this particular purpose, in the year of peace 1949, New Zealand functioned as a one-party State, in so far as public moneys and facilities were placed at the service of one party to a dispute in which the State was at the same time umpire? Secondly, there is a partial, but simple and practical remedy against a repetition of such happenings, and one that has often been urged on lighter provocations—the withdrawal of the Broadcasting Service from Ministerial control. Finally, there is the disturbing silence of responsible opinion outside Parliament. Individuals have spoken out; some bodies of churchmen have spoken out; and it is possible that others have done so. But this was the cue for a corporate

protestation to make the heavens fall, and the cue has been missed. Little man, what now? Only this: to know, and to act on the knowledge, that the liberties of the subject are, in the long run, in his own keeping, and that each generation must stand its wakeful hour of guard upon them. Whether it were more deplorable that these things should have been done, or that they should have been done to so unprotesting a people, I do not know.

G. le F. Young

Revolution on a neglected level

'*Objective: The socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange.*' From a Labour Party policy statement, 1936.

'*Objective: (b) Socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange.*' From the constitution and rules of the New Zealand Federation of Labour, 1943.

'*The workers, like everybody in a competitive society, want more. They not only want more goods, but a better status in society . . . This widespread feeling amongst workers, that they ought to be receiving a larger share of the whole national product of industry, is often justified, but at times it is not . . . Our country is still more than eighty per cent. owned and administered by private enterprise . . . Have we any practical alternative? We know that we have none. We know that the only sensible course is to control private enterprise in such a manner as to give the wage earner a fair share of the product of industry, but not in such a manner as to destroy the whole elaborate structure of modern society with its delicately balanced financial system and price structure, that with all its faults does give us our wages and social services.*' *The History of the Carpenters' Dispute*, 1949, a Federation of Labour pamphlet.

'*Opportunism is liberal-labour politics.*' Lenin.

THE Marxist line on social democracy is clear and definite. The only basis for a reformist labour government, say the Marxists, is imperial-colonialism, a phase of capitalism in which profits from investment in cheap labour areas are so large that a privileged section of the proletariat is allowed to have a small share, and so becomes bourgeois-minded and forgets the class struggle. This

condition applies to New Zealand through Britain, because New Zealand is dependent economically upon Britain.

Social democracy organizes on an electoral basis. Its main object is to attain power through the election of a majority to parliament. This is the end of its ambition, unlike the Communist Party, for which it would only be the beginning. To attain this object, social democratic leaders speak in working class terms, but they have no real class basis. Real socialist revolution is impossible for social democracy because its aim is to work the old liberal parliamentary apparatus which cannot be adapted to socialism.

Social democratic parties accelerate the growth of capitalism, thereby bringing its destruction nearer. As capitalist crises establish in turn monopoly and the threat of fascism, social democratic leaders, doing their best to work an unworkable system, standing on no firm philosophical or class basis, drift to the right, and the breach between them and the workers widens. In the end they will not hesitate to side with capital in violent repressive measures against the workers. Social democratic leaders are capitalism's friends in need; their party is the compromising party, which must be isolated and destroyed before there can be hope of a rupture between the labouring masses and imperialism.

In New Zealand, where the standard of living is high and class strata by no means rigid, the Marxist line may seem too strong, but the recent successes of the Chinese communists have brought the noise of the class war closer, tension is mounting, our own society is showing signs of splitting into two halves with no possibility of a compromise between them.

It is clear to anyone looking at the Federation of Labour's 1949 pamphlet that the New Zealand Labour movement, lacking a philosophy, has fallen into opportunism. The Labour Government has done more than many people thought possible to divide the cake evenly according to capitalist rules. This has been achieved through high taxation, social security, subsidies, import selection and control of overseas funds, and a modicum of control over the issue of credit, both by banks and by large aggregations of capital like insurance companies. Without a high level of world prices, this task would have been very much more difficult. Now the logical end of the process appears to have been reached, and this assumption is confirmed by the 1949 Budget.

It seems that no further major attempts are to be made to spread income more evenly, and indeed it is difficult to see how they could be made within the capitalist framework. Neither industrialists nor farmers are prepared to produce more if their profits are to be taken by taxation, and for their part the workers can hardly be expected to do much overtime or practise greater efficiency if the reward for their work does little more than put up the boss's excess profits tax.

Labour is therefore reduced to maintaining itself in power by opportunism. This is a fundamentally unstable situation, but it may continue without much change for a little while longer if world prices stay up. World prices will stay up if there is no slump in the United States, and the two things preventing a slump there are the European Recovery Programme and vast expenditure on armaments. This is also an unstable situation.

So the Marxist analysis seems in the main correct, although it cannot be used to work out a timetable of events.

If the Labour Party is not prepared to try to attain socialism by consent, we shall find, sooner or later, that we have two unpleasant alternatives in the political sphere; a reactionary dictatorship or a communist dictatorship. The first would have no mitigating features: the second only if it established socialism quickly and then withered away, as according to Marxist theory it should do.

It has not withered away in Russia. It might have been on the verge of doing so with the promulgation of the 1936 Constitution, but the development of fascism outside the country and the purges inside put an end to any thought of looser control by the State. It might wither away in New Zealand, if there were no great pressure from anywhere, but realization of such an ideal must be considered unlikely.

In this situation, where can mass action of any sort lead except to violence and disaster? For my own part I am not prepared to accept the thesis of the temporary nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor do I think that moderate social democracy would sustain civil liberty in the event of sharpened class conflict or in a world-wide atomic war.

Is the solution in non-violence? Again I am dubious about mass non-violence. Even in India, where the masses' philosophy of life in general, and Gandhi's influence in particular made

conditions most favourable, mass non-violent action always seemed to degenerate into violent action after a few days.

Insistence on imposed change and on material development has brought mankind to a point where it must take a great step forward or come close to destroying itself with atomic energy. Marxism in action is the end point of materialism; the summit of its development. It is not enough because man is more than a material being. Man is also mind, and spirit working through mind.

Every individual capable of thought knows that his mind wields some power; that thought creates and action follows thought. Mind, the whole mind, conscious and unconscious, can create in the individual pathological states or a state of well being. Mind working through the parents can make of a child a delinquent or a good citizen. The sum of individual minds has created our material civilization. Mind is a very powerful instrument which is used by everybody, in most cases unknowingly, in some consciously aimed in particular directions for good or evil ends, for material gain or spiritual development.

I must now leap off the familiar ground of reason, which may or may not be solid, to an assumption. Besides the sum of individual minds there is evidence of a universal mind at work; in the balance of nature, in the evolution of life to higher forms, in the precise patterns of material structure, in the organization of energy into different types of matter.

Let the individual assume that universal mind (*a*) endowed him with free will, and (*b*) is wholly good, the essence of well being. Let the individual then assume his own well being, his own wholeness, and with his free will, act on that assumption, thereby working his mind in the same direction as universal mind, which is without limitation. If universal mind is working solely for good, the individual, now that he has ceased his attempts to separate himself from the mind which created him, will also become involved in good to a degree in keeping with his state of development. So long as he sticks to his assumption of well being his actions will result in good for himself and for his fellows. He has achieved wholeness individually and is doing his part towards the achievement of a whole society.

Working on this hypothesis it is therefore impossible to change the formation of society for the better by revolution from the

outside, revolution within the individual must come first. Having accomplished that, he has made his own way clear to act in the best way for himself and society. He does not need to give up his particular job, although he must be ready to. He does not need to give up his possessions, although he must be ready to do that too. Universal mind, working through the individual and his environment, whatever it may be, turns his actions towards good.

But this revolution does not necessarily make life easy or comfortable. The individual must be prepared to accept development as he becomes ready to advance. He may be required to give up what seems a promising career for something which appears at first sight less promising. The choice will be put clearly before him; if he chooses wrongly he will come to know it through conflict within him. If he continues to take his well being for granted in spite of the outward appearance of circumstances and chooses rightly, his development will continue to the next stage. No burden will be put upon him greater than he can carry.

This revolution does not therefore mean the immediate end of political action, but the end of political action as an end in itself. It means applying spiritual reality to politics and to every other part of life, making the parts a whole. It is revolution on the level Marx neglected, the revolution of man into wholeness.

Brian Thompson

Letters from Samoa

(*continued*)

19th December

OUR first studies reveal curious facts, some previously suspected, some altogether surprising. The healthy adolescent is a well of disease. His guts are full of worms—hook, round and whip-shaped. His skin is a culture medium for a fine range of microscopic flora and fauna. His blood chemistry is so deranged as to make nonsense

of the ordinary routine tests. Circulating throughout his system is the microfilaria which leads sooner or later to *mumu*, the deprecatory local name for elephantiasis.

This is the cream of Samoan youth. Any *palagi* thus afflicted would be a bedridden invalid. What then is health? Equilibrium with one's parasites.

The weather continues fair on the whole, with a mild ocean breeze which stirs the moist air enough to keep it comfortable. Temperatures are not above eighty but the high humidity makes this hot if there is no draught, for instance in screened rooms. They have to be screened against mosquitoes, the curse of the island. There are some that bite at night, some that bite by day and some that bite morning and evening—so keeping up a twenty-four hour service. Fortunately there is no malaria.

Samoan mosquitoes are subtle and shy, silent in flight, painless in bite. The local reaction appears hours later and lasts for days. Filaria inoculated today will produce no *mumu* for months or even years, perhaps never; but one cannot without some uneasiness see one of these pretty blue-and-white striped carriers rise, gorged, from one's own skin, knowing that there is nothing to be done about it. It's not possible to be smearing on oily repellants all the time. Everyone gets bitten. Even Samoans sleep beneath netting.

It is of course not true that Samoans are not susceptible to mosquitoes or, for that matter, to sunburn. They go to considerable trouble to keep in the shade, not merely for comfort but to avoid any deepening of their natural pigmentation. Darker skinned peoples are despised, the *palagi* secretly envied; not for their motor-cars and refrigerators and dinner-jackets, which are regarded as irrelevant; not for their conquest of the environment, which is of course something to come to terms with, not to subdue; and not because they are a ruling class, in Samoa the rulers don't necessarily get the best of it; but simply because they are white. How deeply rooted, how universal is the Mithraic myth! The bright angels cast out the dark. Christ must be a blond.

This *mumu* is no great problem to the Samoan, who takes it philosophically and as a rule in a mild form. The huge limbs and bloated genitals, so horribly beloved of textbooks on tropical medicine, are not so very common. With the *palagi* it is quite a different matter. Most whites who stay more than a year or

two seem to become affected and, though the earlier attacks may be nothing worse than a transient swelling or so, fear of the future leads many to depart for a temperate climate, where the thing seems to die out of one's system. The American troops, very few of whom developed symptoms and most of whom weren't here long enough to do so anyhow, fell victim to a sort of mass anxiety state and had to be repatriated in bulk. The effect on morale of a disease even remotely liable to deform one's reproductive apparatus was beyond expectation; much greater, it seems, than fear of venereal disease, where you get something for your money at least, something beyond mere blind victimization by a pretty blue-and-white winged insect.

Control of mosquitoes is traditionally obtained by eliminating the stagnant water in which they can breed. Where it rains often, as in Samoa, any concave surface is a potential breeding ground—shells of fallen coconuts, clefts of trees, the axil of the taro plant —though some are more favourable than others. Clearance of all vegetation down to cropped grass, over a half mile radius, will make any area reasonably free. Obviously this must be done, at least around Apia, if it is ever to be comfortable for Europeans, whatever the sacrifice in foliage.

When we discussed this with residents, the reply was, as usual, that the Samoans would vote against it, their policy being to oppose on principle any attempt at municipal reform or improvement of which the benefit appears more for the white population than themselves, so in fact no one ever proposes anything. Certainly Samoan representation on the Legislative Council is now strong enough to control, at least in a negative sense, such local matters as the Council is empowered to cover. Such amenities as road paving are said to have been persistently opposed, on grounds suspicious of malice: paved sidewalks are naturally of more interest to shoe wearers than to those who go barefoot. Yet where the need is common to all, in health matters especially, Samoan leadership is coming to accept European techniques. The visit of our own party is evidently popular.

Though the *Mau*, the active and largely successful resistance movement of the thirties, exists now only as a salutary reminder to both sides, there is a persistent, if not entirely sincere, cry for full self government; though no doubt responsible leaders are fully aware how easy a prey an ' independent ' Samoa would be

to the new imperialism, busy in the Pacific as elsewhere. The alleged wrongs of Samoa are vigorously urged by that indefatigable champion of down-trodden peoples, the U.S.S.R., whose representatives at Lake Success painted a lurid picture of life in the Islands, where ' seventy thousand natives are the slaves of three hundred and seventy-two (sic) white oppressors '. The U.N.O. Trusteeship Council, evidently more impressed by these accusations than by the New Zealand defence (which sounded a bit bewildered) sternly advised sweeping reforms, among which was the future introduction of ' secondary industries '. Whether this particular item was received by the Samoans with the same enthusiasm that greeted the earlier exposition of their miserable state, I am unable to say. Prosperity is in fact very high at present, with cocoa and copra fetching ten times their pre-war prices. Samoan cocoa is the finest in the world, and entirely free from ' swollen shoot,' the pest that threatens to extinguish the entire West African industry.

23rd December

Mild sensation at the Hospital: one of the student nurses stayed out all night, not a rare occurrence, but news of it got to her parents, who evidently have high standards. So now she claims rape, a term of wide interpretation in Samoa, where the dividing line between force and consent is even hazier than as we know it. The parents demand satisfaction, a policeman calls, now the boy will have to marry her and all will be well, lots of Samoan marriages occur this way. So far the victim is inconsolable, wails repeatedly that she has done ' the bad thing ' (so perhaps it wasn't much of a rape, after all, or like the Welsh girl told the magistrate, ' I rapes very easy, Sir '). Anyway, she will be sacked from the Hospital, *pour encourager les autres.*

The various religious denominations are having mighty celebrations, vying among themselves in the number of Sunday-best white *lava-lavas* they can muster in procession. A good lead in adherents is held by the Ellemess (London Missionary Society) with R.C.s and Presbyterians running neck and neck for second place; Anglicans, Mormons, Plymouth Brethren and Seventh Day Adventists also ran. Every village has several churches, with competition between villages and between sects in the same village

in their size and splendour, great white temples towering above the simple dignity of the thatched homes. Here comes economics. While you can construct your village dwelling out of the bush, material for churches costs money, you can't get cement and iron roofing without hard cash, and to get cash you have to work for the white man's wages. So the Samoan's bid for self-sufficiency founders before his spiritual needs. How deeply these are satisfied by the Church may be doubted, but all Samoans are at least nominally Christians and attend church service one or more times every Sunday, while family prayers at bedtime are enforced by many *matais*.

This last rule is generally relaxed when the moon is full. Then the young people wander freely about the shadowy lanes, gathering in groups to sing in soft harmony or sway in the hot gyrations of the *siva*. Strolling home at a late hour, one may hear whispers or giggles at the roadside, or plucked chords from a muted guitar. 'Goodnight' is courteously returned and if asked to dance they will put on an impromptu show without any false modesty. One must if necessary be prepared to join in—any sort of shimmy movements will do, the less inhibited the better and it's no good being shocked. These *sivas* are perfectly frank sexual incitements, partly traditional in form, with a good deal of scope for improvisation. The most bashful member of our team got involved in a roadside *siva* and took a terrible taunting from a precocious Salome aged thirteen or so, to the vast entertainment of ourselves no less than of the maenad's sophisticated companions. Tiny children are taught the *siva* as soon as they can stand. It's curious to watch their unseemly posturings and rolling eyeballs, wondering how they will distinguish what constitutes 'the bad thing' when the time comes.

Since that first wet week, it has rained only fitfully. The sun shines most of the day, it's rather hot but tempered by a fresh breeze from the sea. In this general period of holiday, we have been taking time off from the laboratory to go swimming. The water of the lagoon is more than merely warm, in the shallows it can be too hot to enter without a shock. It is soft and waveless and full of hazards, visible and invisible—worms that sting, live coral whose scratch will fester for weeks, a malignant fish that lies buried in sand, to shoot hideous spines erect when stepped on. Its microscopic content may be even more noxious, for all anyone

Clifton Firth

R. A. K. Mason

Allen Curnow

Basil Dowling

Clifton Firth

Keith Sinclair

Clifton Firth

Robert Chapman

James K. Baxter

Alistair Campbell

Clifton Firth

John Reece Cole

knows. The sea has become the Samoan's latrine, where before all the world was, since public health officers have persuaded him to build out from the village little jetties, with a roundhouse at the end, beyond high-water mark, whither he is supposed to repair at time of need. As the coast is closely settled, wherever one chooses to bathe cannot be far from one of these jetties and the water, being reef-bound and relatively unchanging, is likely to be contaminated quite heavily. I need only add that the laboratory technique for concentrating the ova of intestinal parasites from human excreta, is to mix the specimen with a strong solution of common salt, to indicate what one may well take in along with a good gulp of the Samoan sea.

We have also done some river bathing, notably at the famous Sliding Rocks. Here is a succession of waterfalls, where the smooth stone bears a slippery film of lichen, over which one can slip on frontside or backside as the fancy takes, to plunge with the full force of the torrent into the pool below. First clean over a twenty foot drop, then, with just time enough to gasp for air as one gains the surface from seemingly bottomless depths, over a three-pronged cascade and finally down a long rippling chute, with goodness knows how many tons of cold clear water on top of one—indescribably exhilarating. (But thank you for describing it just the same, said Saki.)

31st December

Christmas came and went, with little to mark it except roast turkey and paper decorations, obstinate transfers ten thousand miles from where alone they are proper. We are busy with preparations for our main field study, a comprehensive examination of the total inhabitants of a typical village, some three hundred and fifty in all. First we must list all their names and ages, factors both liable to change at the owner's whim, for reasons arbitrary or venal. The other day, a scholarship boy came for his ' medical ' prior to entering the coveted secondary school. His birth certificate stated his age as nine but the down was thick upon his cheek and his dentition was found to be far advanced. Finally he admitted having sat the examination with the aid of a birth certificate belonging to his little brother, some eight years younger. He was downcast, for loss of face, rather than ashamed. As the whole

family, indeed the whole village, must have been in the plot, how can it be punished? Probably in some way that wouldn't occur to us. Samoan punishments tend to be either oblique, in the form of social disapproval, or painfully direct. R—— sometimes has difficulty with his S.M.P.s, usually over their getting after the nurses. They are, after all, qualified doctors and should be amenable to dignified reprimand, but they are also Samoans. Fortunately, it happens that the senior S.M.P. is also a chief of high rank, with the traditional right of physical chastisement. A word in the ear of this massive individual and he beckons the recalcitrant offender round the corner, there to deal him a round dozen with his own leather belt, medical degree and all.

P——, a member of the Hospital staff, left yesterday after a year's service. He must have been very popular, for the airport was thronged with Samoans and he was positively bowed down with *leis*. A girl must sit up half the night to weave one of these elaborate garlands, so that it is a real tribute and he must have been wearing six or eight of them. Custom dictates that you cast the farewell *lei* upon the waters as you push off in your canoe; where the flowers float to shore, at that point will you eventually return.

The Dakota took off, circled and flew back down the airstrip, at five hundred feet or so. The *leis* of P——were seen, tossed from the cockpit, broke delicately as they fell through the air and drifted widely over the cropped grass, to be scooped up by various scampering small boys; a pretty sight and a sentimental thought, modern style.

2nd January

We began work today at Tuana'i. First there was a conference with the Women's Committee, held in the big meeting house, wall-less beneath its great dome of beautifully lashed thatch. For us there are chairs, the village representatives sit on the mat-covered floor, senior members with a post for their backs: cross-legged in Samoan style, one fibula flat on the ground, the other leg laid along the top; try it, you can't do it. Our leader, *via* our interpreting Samoan nurse Moana, explains our objects and requirements. The head madam, a large amiable Amazon of middle age, asks a few questions, passes on her own ideas to the rank and file. We listen politely in total incomprehension, while various opinions are expressed—we don't understand Samoan, nor

they English. Then a grim old battleaxe arrives late, seems not to know what it's all about, thinks someone is stealing a march on her, chips in violently. Voices are raised, eyes flash, fists are shaken across the floor, it looks like the start of a free fight.

Nervously we question Moana, out of corner of mouth, what goes on. She turns a bland, impenetrable smile.

'They are thanking God that you have come to help us.'

Anyway, it all settled down and they dispersed in good humour to muster the children for us. We carried out the same sort of routine as at Avele, modified by our experience there. The children behave well, sitting in silence till their turn comes. Then they submit to handling and injections with less fuss than would their white counterparts. They are very agreeable to look at, apart from their poor ravaged skins, with the flies buzzing round the yaws ulcers. (There's always a silver lining. Yaws confers immunity to syphilis. There is no syphilis in Samoa. Now in Tahiti, almost next door, they don't have yaws, everyone has syphilis. A French colony, of course, my dear fellow. Well, you could take your choice, I suppose.) Here and there among these pretty kids comes one with fairer hair, or skin less dark, or even with blue eyes, in the age group seven or eight. These are the *malini*, relics of the U.S. occupation. They seem a little self-conscious, but that may be just our fancy.

As vital statistics are still incomplete, infant mortality is only to be guessed at. A stroll through the burial ground behind the village, to compare the little graves with the full-sized ones, suggests that it is not small. Weaning seems to be a crucial period, that is any time between twelve and thirty months of age, when the infant abruptly exchanges the breast for a chunk of *taro*. If it can't chew, it starves. I can hardly manage *taro* myself, it has the consistency of turnip left too long in the ground, so clearly only the fittest can survive. It's not that the Samoans are deliberately cruel to their children, who are in any case an economic asset, put to work as soon as they can walk or at least do the *siva*. They are just slow to break an old tradition, like breast feeding too late and *taro* too soon. Life is still cheap, babies are easy to make.

I watched a little boy shin up a great coconut palm, seventy feet in about ten seconds, with a coil of rope over one arm and a cutlass between his teeth. I asked, might he not fall from that

dizzy perch, overbalancing as he began to slash at the huge leaves. Oh, yes, they sometimes do. What happens then? They send for another boy.

Back at the Hospital, a pair of tearful adolescents sit dolefully outside the X-ray Department. After last week's revelation, it was decided to screen all scholarship winners by an X-ray of the elbow joint, where the state of ossification indicates pretty well the true age. Behold, out of the first ten candidates, two impostors! How many of these counterfeits have passed previously, and at what government expense, even to Auckland, with precious berths on the *Matua*, or even on the Dakota, at ends of term? And how did they get on there?

9th January

Our visits to Tuana'i are over. Each day we have rolled up in our station wagons, announced by the long wail blown by a small boy on a conch from Neptune's own orchestra. Each day after a farewell draught from a green coconut, we have driven away laden with a gift assortment of vegetable produce which it would have been an insult to refuse—coconuts, *taro*, pineapples, breadfruit—useless to us but, once out of sight of the village, gratefully received by our nurses and S.M.P.s.

Now we have started on the adult villagers, transported to the Hospital in successive busloads. In this part of our work at least, their co-operation has been magnificent, in fact well over one hundred per cent.; or else the population of the village has swollen to nearly four hundred and fifty. It seems that a number of relatives from neighbouring villages have decided to become temporary residents for our benefit. We have had to turn back several that have tried to come more than once. Why this enthusiasm? Partly, no doubt, for the free ride: they make a picnic of it, bring huge quantities of food, which they consume on the steps of the laboratory, one has to step gingerly over the baskets and between the bodies. Partly as an excuse off work. Mostly, I think, out of curiosity, to peep behind the scene of *palagi* monkey tricks. I found them amused and somewhat awed by the chest radiography which was part of their routine examination, inquisitive but never impertinent, over-helpful but never obstructive.

Individual interrogation, with an S.M.P. as interpreter, requires patience, and more than patience.

'Does he cough?'

'No,' after some questioning. We note it down.

'He doesn't cough?' (just to make sure.)

'Yes.' But we aren't caught by that one, we know now that he means, logically enough, 'Yes, what you say is correct, he doesn't cough.'

Next comes a young woman, comely and coy.

'Is she married?'

'No, Sir,' after prolonged colloquy; we wonder why on earth it always takes him six questions to pose our simplest enquiry.

'Has she any children?'

'She is not married, Sir.'

'All right, but has she no children?'

With a reproachful look at us, for he is a pastor's son, he asks her.

'Yes.' We guessed as much, a buxom wench like this.

'How many?'

'Yes, she has no children.' He caught us that time.

'You're sure, no children?' Rather tetchily, he questions her again, then turns to us with simple dignity.

'She is not married, Sir.'

But even this is drawing to an end. The final busload will be dealt with next Thursday, and on Friday I have to return to New Zealand, leaving the others to finish such of the laboratory work as cannot be sent after us to Dunedin for later examination.

The time has been too short, too short to have much fun, only just long enough for us to finish the job; but at least not long enough for the place to go sour on us, as it obviously has for many. Samoa for the white man must be a short-term affair, while he still has to share it with the mosquito, at any rate. I have a feeling myself that one will see the other out of the place, but I don't know which. And the Samoan, where will he be, what will he be, on the momentous day? Much the same as today, I dare say, and not much different from a millennium back. Does not Toynbee class him among the 'frozen' civilizations, along with the Nomad and the Eskimo, those that at an early date reached a relatively high state of development, from which for some reason they failed to go either forward or back? A good

enough arrangement, I would have thought, in a Garden of Eden, minus the Fall, but Toynbee says tut-tut.

So perhaps on Thursday night one of the pretty maids at the hotel will sit up late weaving a *lei* for me, or perhaps not. With *lei* or without, I wing next morning across that vast sea, where the atolls from my great height are but minute faults, exquisitely fissured, in one endless floor of blue. Looking back at where my flower petals float to earth, how soon shall I be able to return? Better, says wisdom, never. Keep it like this.

Peter Munz

Proust and Philosophy

I

THE novel is the most peculiarly modern form of art. Whether in such clear and straightforward narratives as Feilding's *Tom Jones* or in the stories where subtlety and critical analysis have been developed to perfection such as the works of Joyce, Thomas Mann or Proust—the peculiar characteristic of the novel is that the narrator always protrudes quite consciously into his work of art. His personality is not only present in the sense in which it is present in all human artefacts: but it plays a purposeful and essential part in the story itself. For the novel is an attempt to enable people to look at the world through the eyes of other men: it does not merely present a certain view or spectacle to our contemplation but wants to assist us to abandon our own individual standpoint in favour of that of other people. And the personality of the author is brought into the story as an essential part in both its intellectual and its emotional aspects in order to act as a bridge or a mediator. The author takes, to begin with, the reader's side. He knows the latter's standpoint and way of looking at things; then he brings up his characters and their situations and endeavours to explain. The novel is in this sense a peculiarly subtle and very

self-conscious form of art. It not only is a work of art but also an attempt to explain it; or, to be more exact, its art consists in establishing a bridge between reader and character, between our world and that of others.

It is no accident that the novel should have developed during the last two hundred years—and in fact during the same period in which the study of history developed. For the novel is, formally, not different from a historical narrative. The latter, to be sure, can be verified by reference to documents or other objective remains of the past, whereas the former cannot be verified at all; or, if at all, only by reference to the real existence under slightly different circumstances of fictitious persons. But more important than this material difference is their formal similarity: both types of intellectual activity are essentially characterized by the fact that they are meant to be a bridge between present and past, between one person and another.

Literary forms of art preceding the novel show a marked resemblance to historical narratives preceding the development of historical study proper during the middle of the eighteenth century. Until that time historians were firmly convinced that men were always and everywhere the same, that their histories were therefore all similar and repetitive and differed only accidentally through external circumstances. They felt no need to consider the writing of history a bridge between one man and another, between present and past. They studied history because they considered history to be *magistra vitae* and owing to its presumed repetitive character it was indeed admirably suited as a storehouse of examples and precepts. A mediation between past and present was not needed at all: they believed that the account of an event or a character was self-explanatory because it was one particular instance of a general experience known to and shared by everybody. Literary art was an expression of the same conviction. Characters and events were presented in poetry and drama; they were admittedly different from each other. But even in so far as they did not present merely subtle variations of well classified types they were still represented as tableaus to be looked at and admired from the outside. They served to edify or to purify (catharsis) the reader or the audience. If there was community of purpose or of emotion the reader could understand easily enough; if there was none, the reader was left to make his

own effort. But in no case was the attempt to bridge the gulf itself an integral part of the work of art.*

With the romantic revolution it dawned on men that human beings were essentially different from one another and that each of us lives in a world of his own: 'Individuum est ineffabile—daraus leite ich mir eine ganze Welt ab' ('The individual is not to be explained—from this maxim I infer a whole view of the world.' Goethe). Whereas it had been necessary so far to explain individual variations which were of course known to exist, the problem was now shifted. It became incumbent on men to explain why, in spite of the fact that ultimately an individual and unique standpoint can never be considered merely a particular instance of a general principle, men still managed to communicate with one another and succeeded at times in reaching at least a certain measure of rough agreement. Hence the new attitude to history and the beginning of the modern novel. Both forms of modern literature were born of the need felt so strongly ever since that men must be explained to each other and that one man's world must be connected with another man's world lest the two live in complete loneliness. In both novel and history other people are not just put in front of us for us to look at; but, owing to the author's awareness of the difference between people, these works of art embody in themselves as their most marked characteristic, the endeavour to explain one man's world to another. They act as a bridge of communication between the many individual worlds and the kind of understanding or knowledge they produce is the communion which is reached by approaching another person and trying, by an imaginative effort, to look upon the world through his eyes.†

*In drama the problem of mediation between one standpoint and another exists only for the actors. To the audience they simply become the characters they play. But to themselves they remain also the persons they are and hence arises the need for explaining the relationship between the two and the problem of the bridge. It is only in the very modern and over-sophisticated drama that the audience is allowed to look at the actor's problem; e.g. in *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, in *By the Skin of our Teeth*, in *Ever since Paradise*.

†We should be careful to distinguish these attempts at intellectual communion from mystical or erotic contacts. It may be true that the latter are the only ones that lead to the desired result; but there can be no doubt that the intellect is engaged on a quest peculiar to itself in this direction.

This type of knowledge consists of the stratum extracted from different minds. It is not knowledge about other minds as natural objects; but knowledge of other minds as minds which are as autonomous, as passionate, as rational, as secret, as loving as our own. Since we have discovered that human beings are unique individuals and live in worlds that are absolute and unconditional to themselves, we have discovered also, very gradually at first, but more thoroughly later on, that our traditional type of philosophy is pretty well irrelevant. A philosophy that consists of general rules and principles out of which it endeavours to explain the workings and conduct of the human mind is trying to explain something which we know now no longer exists: universal human nature. This type of philosophy with its metaphysics—though it cannot exactly be proved false—has lost its grip on the human mind because we necessarily consider it irrelevant. Hence we have not been able to defend it when it was attacked and complacently destroyed by pragmatists and positivists of all colours and intentions. Not that we do not feel uneasy about these attacks—for they are based on more metaphysics and, worse, on naive prejudices. But we have felt that traditional metaphysics was not worth defending for the reasons given above. And thus we have allowed pragmatists and positivists to discredit the most time-honoured and dignified pursuit of the human intellect, philosophia perennis.

But if we look at the matter more closely we will find that our new conception of man has merely deflected our interest and attention from the great traditional works of metaphysics. The problem itself, the question as to the nature and purpose of our existence and the motives for conduct related to it, force themselves upon our attention as urgently as they did two thousand years ago. The real difference is that the great works of metaphysics in the nineteenth and twentieth century are the novels, and not the fanciful treatises on that part of physical nature which is supposed to exist beyond the senses. But if we, as philosophers, persist in the mistake of neglecting the question as to the nature and purpose of our existence, we will merely invite the comments of the crank and of the demagogue on these vital questions: Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi. The real metaphysics of our age is represented by the novels of Thomas Mann, Joyce and Proust: there lies the challenge to philosophers as the challenge

two thousand years ago had lain in the *Timaios* and the *Republic*.

The novel was the answer to the new conception of man which people were beginning to form about two hundred years ago. For that reason we must turn to the novel for a clarification of our metaphysical questions since no other form of art or of intellectual inquiry has adapted its methods to this new conception. The present essay is an attempt to discuss some of the philosophical problems raised by the work of Proust. It will be understood, of course, that the following arguments are not Proust's arguments but an attempt to develop the theoretical assumptions which he might have made had he been interested in the philosophical aspect of his work. Since he was an artist he took the theory for granted and merely proceeded to apply it.

II

The knowledge and truths conveyed by Proust do not consist of propositions about men and the world but of propositions about himself; or, to be more exact, of propositions about his own subjective feeling-states or consciousness. His concern with these feeling-states arises from his recognition that they constitute what one ought to call Reality. They are that part of us whence spring our actions and from which we draw our convictions: the last irreducible residuum in our conscious (or unconscious) minds. We can distort facts, refute or support theories, act in one way or another: but we cannot but accept our own feeling-states which force themselves upon us as the really 'brute facts' of our nature. But what is their character? Are they really nothing but subjective states of consciousness?

Proust has been criticized very sharply for what was supposed to be his passive indulgence in these pure states of consciousness. These states were dismissed as subjective fantasy—and Gide once said that he was again and again surprised by the lack of curiosity about men and the world exhibited by the symbolist school whose greatest representative did in fact, later in life, when he was busy with the composition of his work, sleep during the day and wake at night in order to be sheltered from external impressions. And yet—no reader of Proust can deny that there is very little fantasy in his work and that most of the events and people he describes are so very interesting because we can *all* experience them. To

take only one example: Proust's analysis of jealousy as it manifests itself in Swann, Chalus and Marcel is a masterpiece of description of the essential elements of a universal phenomemon. What he describes as 'jealousy' is in fact the meaning that is more or less clearly intended whenever anybody speaks of jealousy. In order to understand clearly what Proust did, we must inquire more closely into his method. For if to sleep by day and wake at night (i.e. to reverse the ordinary process of cognition) were all there was to it, we could never account for the fact that what he said is true for us as well as for him.

The criticism of his method and the consequent dismissal of his results as subjective fantasy is based on a gross misunderstanding due to the ordinary and common belief that the world is divided into objects and subjects; that the latter contemplate the former in one way or another and that the resulting propositions are either true or false descriptions of the former. If this is accepted —and such a scheme is indeed the basic pattern of all theories of knowledge, Proust's method with its exclusive concentration on subjective states of consciousness must appear absurd. For Proust rejects the dichotomy of subject and object and concentrates on the 'subject' alone. On the usual theory of knowledge, then, the universal applicability of Proust's results cannot be explained. If the dichotomous pattern is the only pattern, we ought indeed to dismiss Proust's work as fantasy; and conversely, since we cannot dismiss it as such, there must be an alternative to the dichotomous pattern. What then is the alternative pattern of knowledge against which Proust can be appreciated?

One of the most important states of mental clarity and awareness is produced by, or rather is characteristic of, the situation in which we can point at something or somebody, slap our foreheads and say: 'Why! of course, this is exactly how I feel!' In such a situation we should speak of 'having knowledge'. This type of knowledge is most common and yet one that has been persistently neglected by philosophy. Philosophy has traditionally defined knowledge as the subsumption of concepts. This was the Platonic or Aristotelian heritage—according to whether it took place ideally or empirically. During more recent centuries, philosophers obsessed by the practical notion that knowledge ought to be an instrument for the control of nature, physical as well as mental, have been concerned with those kinds of knowledge

which enable us to predict events. This type of knowledge consists of propositions which assert the regularity of a sequence of events. And thus the most common type of knowledge has been neglected in serious discussion. The essential characteristic of this form of knowledge is symbolization. In the situation described, understanding results from the meaning which the object or event or situation pointed to bestows on the consciousness or awareness of the author of the statement. The object is taken to be a symbol of the consciousness and is said to ' mean it.'*

It is essential that feeling-states should not be symbolized by birds or by imaginary objects such as angels or unicorns. Such incongruous symbolizations are at times responsible for the most awkward and baffling types of confusion. The confusions thus caused cannot be cleared up by simply dismissing knowledge by symbolization altogether, and by insisting that only either of the other types of knowledge can avoid such puzzles. Such puzzles are avoided best by a strict adherence to the principle of congruity. A feeling-state must be symbolized only by another feeling-state; and an awareness of a certain situation only by another situation of the same kind. (One might argue, of course, that the serious problem arises just at this very point, for how is one to know whether a certain situation is of the ' same kind ' or not? We must concede the objection and defer the answer.)

The symbol thus pointed at has a two-way function. In one sense it enables us to express a feeling-state and in another sense it serves to render our own feeling-state conscious to ourselves. Strictly speaking it is a symbol only in the first sense; in the second sense it is a formula. As an expressive function we symbolize a feeling-state; as an impressive function, something acts as a formula. Every image formed of the world, whether it is tactual, visual or auditory, is a symbol—and every impression received is a formula. There is a constant action and interaction between the two; for every symbol is at the same time also a formula. If

*Knowledge by symbolization, by using an event or a person, etc., as a symbol, must not be confused with knowledge by naming. The latter is no knowledge at all since it only substitutes a name, i.e. a sound for the object to be known. The confusion might arise from the habit of calling a name a symbol. Nor is this knowledge an ' ostensive definition '; for by ostensive definition we define a concept—not a state of consciousness—by pointing at an object.

we feel impotently irritated, for instance, we might symbolize this feeling-state by an image of two lovers at cross-purposes; and at the same time the experience of two lovers at cross-purposes is acting as a formula for the feeling-state we designate as ' impotent irritation '. The meaning we thus assign to a feeling-state by taking a certain experience as a formula is thus suggested by other people; and simultaneously we would never understand the two lovers at cross-purposes if we were not acutely aware of an impotent irritation and symbolized it by pointing at the two lovers.

Owing to this two-way function of the symbol there is no such thing as proper subjectivity. Proper subjectivity, if there were such a condition, would not only be inarticulate but also entirely unaware of everything. A man in a condition of pure subjectivity would be both dumb and obtuse—for he could never be aware of his own feeling-states since he could not point at symbols nor use other people's symbols as formulas. Even supposing that he used a private system—his system would have to be internally consistent, i.e. adhere to a one-to-one correlation between feeling-states and symbols/formulas and vice versa. If it were not consistent, a symbol would mean now one, now another feeling-state and hence obtuseness would result. The consistency of the system, however, would enable any other man to co-ordinate his own system with the first by the mere drawing up of a vocabulary or of certain rules of translation thereby ensuring that it is not a subjective system.

The empirical basis of this mode of knowledge is nominalistic in that all its propositions are propositions about such and such a person. They have no universal validity and express nothing about human nature or conduct. They are all statements about a particular case and cannot be derived from a universal concept or from a general law. This mode of knowledge, in fact, does not contain any truths which can be tested in a general way, but truths about individuals only. Interest, for instance, is not focussed on the fact of love producing more sorrow than joy but on such and such a person feeling that it did. The interest in truth is transposed from facts (' love produces more sorrow than joy ') to feeling-states or states of consciousness ('A believes that . . .', 'A feels that . . .'). The truth about facts is rendered not only a matter of secondary interest but becomes entirely irrelevant. In

this way the whole world of facts—or of nature—is relegated to a position of complete unimportance and judgment about it kept in a state of suspense. We reserve our opinion about it because it is of no consequence, and all significant judgments are concerned with the feeling-states of one or another particular person. Only through a logical trick could the nominalistic basis of this mode of knowledge be denied.

This basic nominalism, however, is gradually overcome through the process of symbolization, through which each single person, engaged in the attempt to render his own feeling-states meaningful to himself, is compelled to enter the universe of other people's feeling-states and to draw on their symbols in order that he may use them as formulas for his own feeling-states. Nominalism, therefore, is, though the beginning, not the end of our understanding. A feeling-state or state of consciousness which is understood or rendered meaningful has through this very process transcended the purely subjective and particular reference which, in theory, it originally possessed and has acquired a trans-subjective, if not strictly speaking universal, sphere of application.

By transposing the interest in truth from facts to states of consciousness, we have created or defined the realm of Reality, i.e. of those of our experiences which are really 'brute and hard'. There is no significant sense in which we can say that these states exist in space and time, except in so far as they are experiences by a certain person at a certain time. In this sense they can be considered as attributes of a man's existence. But these terms are really misleading as such states are not experienced in the way an object or an event can be said to be experienced. They are not a term in the relationship between subject and object, the basic relationship of the alternative mode of knowledge. Nor is it more correct to say that they arise on the retina of the 'inner eye'—for strictly speaking a state of consciousness does not 'arise'. If it did, then we would have to presuppose that there was another state of consciousness of which the newly arisen one is the intended object. This presupposition would only force the argument one stage further back, since we would now be obliged to explain the manner in which the presupposed state of consciousness has been perceived or has arisen. The answer to all these and to many other similar puzzles must be sought in the insight that a state of consciousness is, by its very nature, not an object of perception

or an experience at all, but something that is either with us or not with us. In this sense we must say that as far as Reality is concerned there is no epistemological problem at all, for Reality is simply what we are aware of anyway and that which in turn first enables us to know anything at all as an experience. The only problems connected with Reality are the problems of symbolization and of congruity. For these reasons we cannot speak of Reality, i.e. of states of consciousness or of feeling-states, as existing in space and time. For if we did we would assert that it could be the object of a perception by a subject as everything else that exists in space and time. And since such perception would make nonsense of the notion ' state of consciousness ' we must conclude that the nature of these states is extra-temporal, spiritual and eternal: or, in other words, that they have no ontological status at all. Hence the so common description of the single-minded devotion to Reality as a devotion to the ' inner life '.

This in brief outline is the theory of knowledge behind the work of Proust which accounts for the otherwise inexplicable fact, that an exclusive concentration on what he called the ' inner life ' and an almost complete loss of interest in the ' world of facts ' led him to such a lucid understanding of certain states of consciousness.

III

The success of this mode of knowledge depends entirely on our willingness and ability to take other people seriously, so that we may see them not only as symbols of, but use them at the same time as formulas for our feeling-states. In all probability a perfect equilibrium can never be reached, for each one of us harbours in his breast a little schizophrenic or paranoiac tempting him in one direction or the other. Proust himself understood very clearly at least in theory that the success of the method would depend on such an equilibrium. He knew that Swann's love for Odette was both a symbol of and a formula for his own love for Albertine. In the former sense he saw and understood Swann's love for Odette just as much as and in the same light in which he had experienced his love for Albertine; and in the second sense it was just his knowledge of Swann's love for Odette which had fixed in his mind very firmly the meaning of love and had taught

him what to expect and what meaning he was to attribute to his own awareness of Albertine.*

Nevertheless Proust was prone to err very heavily on the symbolic side. He used his characters and their lives more often as symbols than as formulas and we cannot help feeling therefore that most of the truths expressed in his work—with the exception of his descriptions of jealousy in its various manifestations of expectation and anxiety—are in fact to a very large degree subjective and have no application to persons other than Proust himself. The world he sees is a symbol of his own consciousness and consequently exhibits the same weird, nervous, hesitant and over-anxious traits as Proust's own mind. Not that we would expect him to say anything at all about the world as the world of facts. His very method precludes such statements. But his own method, if fully applied, would have led him not only to seeing in other people the reflections of his own consciousness but also to recognizing more often in his own consciousness the reflections of other people.

Proust himself seems to have been aware of this difficulty, for in one place he defends himself against the charge that he had actually never loved Albertine as another person and a real woman and that he had never seen anything in her but a creation of his own fancy. But he replies to these critics that what he had experienced for Albertine was really love of a man for a woman; it was not his fault that love is so riddled with the desire to dominate and so perturbed by continuous jealousy that it looks like a caricature of what some people imagine to be true love. That his love exhibited these traits so markedly cannot be taken as proof that it was not real love for Albertine as another person and a woman. The point, however, is that we cannot accept Proust's defence any more than his critics' charge; for it is quite true that the sort of love Proust had experienced for Albertine was what the state of love meant to him—for he had used Swann's love for Odette as a formula and these feelings were exactly what

* ' . . . if my love for Albertine had been a multiple variation of Swann's for Odette . . .', XII, 394; ' For we are not as faithful to the being we have most loved as we are to ourselves and sooner or later we forget her . . . At the very most, she whom we have so much loved has given a particular form to that love which will make us faithful to her even in our infidelity.' XII, 262.

he had then learnt love to mean. And yet it is doubtful whether he had not already then used Swann's love as a symbol rather than as a formula. However this may be, it seems that from Proust's own point of view the problem cannot be cleared up. We must confine ourselves for the present to the conclusion that an ideal equilibrium can never be reached and that any adjustment must remain a matter of degree.

Let us rather look at the use Proust makes of the method in regard to a certain state of consciousness. One of the main themes of Proust's work is the feeling that things are always different from what we think they are. In this way everything somehow eludes us: no sooner have we seen a situation than it has already changed; and if we call one thing by a name we find on checking up that we ought to have called it by a different name. This feeling-state accounts for a large amount of frustration, for a general hesitancy and even humility and, last but not least, for sorrow and despair. This feeling-state is symbolized throughout the novel and it will suffice to quote two outstanding examples.

When Albertine is gone, Marcel writes to her in order to urge her to return. But since she will only return when she feels that he is not desperate for her, he writes as if he did not want her to return. No sooner is the letter posted than he feels, owing to his ruse which will ensure her return, no longer any desire for her return and very little love. Here we find the inability to grasp anything clearly symbolized by the eternal see-saw of a love relationship. In another instance we find the same feeling-state symbolized by the long drawn out development of the social fortunes of Swann and his family. Swann was well received in society in spite of being a Jew. But when he marries a prostitute he loses his prestige and neither he nor his wife nor his daughter is considered respectable. But after his death his wife marries again—and now his daughter can return into society; for it is now commonly held that the reason for the ostracism had been that her father was a Jew.

These symbols express Proust's feeling-states and in turn they can be used by others as formulas for their own feeling-states: there can be no doubt in fact that every sympathetic reader will increase his sense of frustration and sorrow very considerably by reading these stories. And again, though we take them to be

Proust's symbols it is certain that Proust himself picked them up, partly at least, by looking at other people.

The most important feature of his symbols is that Proust uses them always with the strictest adherence to the principle of congruity. It is quite conceivable that Proust, in order to reach full awareness of these feeling-states by making them articulate, might have expressed them either naturalistically, i.e. by means of a psychological theory; or supernaturalistically, i.e. by means of a theological doctrine. But not once in his whole work did he ever abandon the principle of congruity. He always chose his symbols from other people's feeling-states, for he realized that only such congruous symbols could be taken to convey the proper meaning of his own feeling-states; just as only congruous formulas could be allowed to render his own feeling-states meaningful to himself. In the two cases which we referred to above a feeling-state is symbolized simply by pointing at events or persons as they appear to a human eye not burdened by psychological or theological doctrine. For owing to the extra-temporal nature of a feeling-state any symbolization which would take into account a theological or psychological way of looking at things would result in an incongruity in so far as both a psychological and a theological explanation of the feeling-state would impose a system of time and space co-ordinates upon it. A psychological explanation would force the feeling-state into the world of naturalistic space-time; and a theological explanation would force it into the invisible world of supernatural space-time. Only a straight-out symbolization by events not interpreted psychologically or theologically can leave the feeling-states as they are.

To make this clearer let us briefly glance at a possible psychological and theological explanation of the feeling-states in question. If we are bent on a theological explanation, we can create or point at certain mythical powers which have a supernatural existence and which explain the peculiar sense of frustration. Around this we might weave a whole network of theological dogma and of moral precepts derived from it. The feeling-state of frustration is then no longer taken for what it is but is considered the effect of supernatural causes. It loses its status as an ultimate Reality and becomes a function of supernature, which replaces it as Reality. Or we can search for a psychological understanding, assuming, for instance, the existence of a super-ego, an ego and

an id and explaining the sense of frustration by too great a discrepancy between the first and the last and recommending a cure through an adjustment of the two to reasonable proportions. In this case the feeling-state is taken as the effect of a natural cause and instead of being an ultimate Reality becomes a function of a natural concatenation of events. It is clear that in neither case is full justice done to the feeling-state as such—for it is not taken for what it is but is regarded as the result of some supernatural or natural condition. By being treated as the effect of a cause it loses its extra-temporal character by being forced into a certain time-sequence. Since most people believe that everything must exist in space-time they are always prone to assign an ontological status to feeling-states by translating them into either a natural or a supernatural system of space-time, according to their preference. For the interesting feature of the supernaturalistic treatment is that it proceeds by an assignation of an ontological status just like the naturalistic treatment and differs from the latter only in that its system of space-time is beyond the reach of our five senses.

There is no doubt room for the objection that there is no obvious reason why we should be so insistent that Reality consists of feeling-states in themselves rather than of nature or supernature respectively. But the objection does not allow for the peculiar fact that no amount of evidence can ever help us to settle the intricate question of whether the naturalistic or the supernaturalistic treatment would be the 'correct' one. Any evidence to which we could appeal would be either natural or supernatural, i.e. it would consist either of sensory or of extra-sensory experience. In order to establish the preferential claim of nature we would have to exclude the latter; in order to establish the preferential claim of supernature we would have to exclude the former. But on what grounds other than an arbitrary decision can we exclude either? To base the decision on the principle that sense-experience is or is not an adequate means of perceiving Reality is to beg the question, for the validity of the principle depends entirely on this decision. This kind of argument assumes what it sets out to prove. These considerations compel us to believe that a naturalistic or supernaturalistic treatment are nothing but possible interpretations of Reality and that we must call Reality that which is not interpreted in any way but which presents itself to us or in us as it really is, namely as a feeling-state.

IV

Bearing all these points in mind let us now proceed to an examination of Proust's principles in the light of some major issues of modern philosophy.

In a sense in which it was certainly not intended Proust has fulfilled Whitehead's demand that we should overcome the bifurcation of Nature created by the subject-object dichotomy. It is unlikely that Whitehead thought or would have approved of the resolution of the dichotomy in the way in which it was resolved by Proust. Proust's method simply drew our attention to the fact that what we call Reality is within us; that what lies outside is hardly Reality and that that which philosophers from Plato to Whitehead have called Reality, i.e. the world behind sensory experience, is in truth only that part of external nature which for one reason or another is presumed to escape the grasp of the senses. Once this move was made, the dichotomy disappeared automatically. We are left with a distinct awareness of the realm of Reality compared with which everything else we might experience is only a fleeting dream. The importance of this step, however, does not lie in the discovery of another new method for the perception (logical or empirical) of Reality; but in the discovery of a new field which is said to constitute Reality. We might thereafter proceed to an examination of both traditional and modern metaphysics in order to show that they all sprang from incongruous treatments of Proustian Reality. Metaphysicians, in other words, instead of accepting the feeling-states for what they were have assigned in the past a supernaturalistic and, more recently, a naturalistic status to them. If we could retranslate all metaphysics into feeling-states and endeavour to symbolize them congruously, we could make use of the magnificent storehouse of human experiences collected over a period of two thousand five hundred years under conditions which can now never be reproduced and which have therefore a unique value. Such retranslation would proceed by depriving all metaphysical theories of their ontological status and by discovering thus the statements they make about feeling-states. They could then be rendered meaningful through congruous symbolization. In this way there might be developed a whole systematic treatment of the potentialities of human consciousness: we might discover in the end what

it means to be human by outlining the capacities of men's consciousness.

Modern philosophy, instead, has been seriously concerned with the discovery of a new method of grasping Reality. This Reality, for one reason or another, is assumed to exist behind sensible appearance. But as we have seen it is in truth nothing but a hypostatization (through the assignation of an ontological status) of feeling-states in natural or supernatural space-time. Nevertheless it is significant that Proust's method should have a close bearing on the two most important theories advanced in that respect, the theories of Bergson and Husserl. There is no doubt that Proust knew of Bergson and was so deeply impressed by him that he made direct use of his work in his last volume. It is extremely improbable that Proust was acquainted with Husserl's work; and everything that we say in this connection must be regarded as pure construction.

Bergson explains how the real nature of things and especially of life must always elude a mode of knowledge which is static. For in reality everything endures through time and no proposition about anything can express more than a partial and relative truth since the most essential characteristic of the object it purports to describe must by definition escape it: endurance in time. He suggests therefore that in order to understand the world as it really is, we must rely on our intuitive grasp of time and identify ourselves with or submerge ourselves in the world as it endures through time. Only such intuitive knowledge does justice to the real nature of things. From this there follows Bergson's anti-rational bias and his distrust of the intellect. Proust was in a way concerned with fundamentally the same problem, i.e. with the feeling-state of desolation at the transience of people and places. All beauty and all love, he found, is but momentary: even at the pitch of actual enjoyment one knows quite clearly that soon it will all be over. Time is irretrievably lost. Pure memory or an analytical intellectual reconstruction fails to recapture lost time because in spite of a possible ideal completeness of the memory it can never be quite the same thing. Memory lives in the moment in which one remembers, not in the lost moment of past time. Towards the end of his life Proust discovered, however, how time can be regained: intuitively one can suddenly live once more a moment of lost time. Stimulated by a momentary condition the

past can become the present again—not through the intellectual effort of memory but through the intuitive association of all the relevant conditions with the momentary initial condition that set the intuition in motion.

To Bergson the object to be grasped is outside ourselves. Reality confronts us as subjects. He discovered that Reality was of such and such a constitution and adjusted his method of grasping it accordingly. But to Proust the Reality to be regained lies within ourselves and is in itself outside time. We lose a feeling-state because as existing beings we are within time and move on. But at times it is possible to step out of this existence in time and to concentrate exclusively on a state of consciousness which might have been an attribute of our existence years ago, thus to regain what in the flux of our existence seemed to be lost. Proust finds his Reality in the extra-temporal realm of states of consciousness; Bergson grasps Reality by the intuitive seizure of enduring time.

For this reason Bergson has rejected the intellect as the very antithesis of time and does not hold it to be an adequate method of grasping Reality. To Proust, the intellect has on the other hand a very special value, for it is in no way antithetical to his timeless Reality. It has no power to regain lost time; but it has the function of unwinding the threads that tie one state of consciousness to another and of disentangling the inner, often subconscious logic, by which one state of consciousness coheres with another. It can therefore act as the initial instrument for the intuitive recapture of that other state which seemed lost. Bergson merely invented a new method to grasp the ephemeral and invisible part of the external world; Proust directed our attention to that which is actually real within us and found that no special method was required in order to describe it.

Husserl approached the problem from a different angle. He set out to discover Reality by following the maxim: 'Zu den Sachen selbst!' In his quest for 'the things themselves' he found them not entirely constituted naturally by the external world but also partly by concepts or 'essences' which are not part of the external, natural world. In order to study these 'essences' he proposed to bracket the natural world and to suspend judgment as to whether it really was there or not. He was left with the world of essences in his own consciousness. This consciousness was of great interest to him not because it was in itself a Reality but

because it was always intentional, i.e. it always had an object of the external world as its intention. Consciousness, to him, was always consciousness of something. His only concern, however, was the world as an object of contemplation. And his whole effort was directed towards the elucidation of that Reality.

Proust would have thought that Husserl was on the right track; for he too was concerned with finding that realm of pure states of consciousness. But whereas Husserl, obsessed by the traditional notion that Reality meant the external world, could see in the states of consciousness nothing but states intending the external world, Proust recognized that the states of consciousness were Reality itself. Husserl at times was inclined to a similar view: but by this view he committed himself to an epistemological idealism. For anyone who thinks that the outside world is the intended object of our states of consciousness but who believes that these states are the only Reality, is an idealist. Proust on the other hand cannot be called either an idealist or a realist. For he did not believe that the external world was the object intended by our states of consciousness. The problem—whether the external world constitutes our consciousness or whether our consciousness constitutes the external world—was therefore of no consequence to him. By a subjective state of consciousness he did not mean a state which intended something; but a state which constituted his awareness. Strictly speaking he would not say: 'I am conscious of something'; but: 'My state of consciousness is, e.g. frustration'. To Proust consciousness was not intentional. When he proposed to follow the maxim 'Zu den Sachen selbst,' he understood that by these 'brute facts' we ought to understand our feeling-states or states of consciousness, for they were the ultimate Reality. By being much more radical than Husserl he discovered in the realm of consciousness that ultimate Reality which Husserl sought to grasp by merely making use of the realm of consciousness.

On Proust's principles we might say that there is a state of consciousness such as 'I can see a chair'. Whether there actually is a chair or not is of no concern, since, as we explained in a preceding section, every judgment about the world is suspended and our interest confined to the individual's awareness which is his Reality. For this Reality the existence or non-existence of the chair is of no importance: all that matters is that the statement

'I can see a chair' should be true. This state of consciousness can then be symbolized and used by others as a formula. By this process one can overcome its nominalistic basis. The important point is that the statement does not describe the external world but a state of consciousness, and that it is therefore a statement about Reality—for the very reason that it is not about the chair.* This would never have done for Husserl; for Husserl was ultimately only interested in the chair as an object and in the possibility of our knowledge of it as subjects. In this way he could never find that the realm of consciousness was complete in itself and self-constitutive. It remained to him a means to an understanding of what he, like all other orthodox philosophers, considered to be Reality.

The striking feature in Proust is that he eliminates the traditional dichotomy by directing our attention to a field which no philosopher before his time had dared to designate as Reality; though many had actually been aware of the fact that this realm played a more or less important part in the constitution of our mind. This realm should become the true subject-matter of philosophy. At first there may be nothing very striking, from a purely philosophical point of view, in Proust's exclusive interest in subjective states of consciousness. But on closer examination one finds there a most fruitful new approach to the quest for an understanding of the human mind: Proust radically eliminated the notion that the external world is as such a given Reality which we must confront and study. Here perhaps is an end to the 'bifurcation of nature' that was the burden of Whitehead's complaint, and an avenue along which might lie new eras in philosophical thought.

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*Hegel might have found very much in common with Proust; for he too believed in the complete autonomy of the realm of consciousness. But, unlike Proust he never merely suspended judgment about the existence of the external world as being of no consequence to the realm of consciousness. He was deeply committed to the dichotomous theory of knowledge and stuck to the view that knowledge about Reality must always be knowledge about something other than himself. (For Proust the 'other' was other people, not the external world.) But deeply convinced that the only real things were the states of consciousness he resolved to deny the independent existence of the external world and held it to be constituted by our own mind. Thus he became an idealist and was committed to the strange view that the existence of e.g. a chair depends on the coherence of my assertion that it exists with that of other people that it exists.

COMMENTARIES

David B. Carrad

Goethe at Victoria College

AT THE time of Victoria University College's Jubilee in May last, Dr Danilow and the students taking Russian under him put on some scenes from *Gore ot Uma* (*Woe from Wit, or The Misfortune of being Clever*) by A. S. Griboedov. So far as is known here, this was the first time a Russian play had been staged, in Russian, in New Zealand. The show went off very well indeed, and was watched by an audience interested in spite of widespread ignorance of the language being used. V.U.C. should look forward to more plays in Russian, and to an increasing audience capable of understanding them. In the meantime, Dr Danilow is to be congratulated for his achievement.

Some three months later, the Deutschsprachige Gesellschaft of V.U.C. celebrated the bicentenary of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who was born at Frankfort on the Main on the 28th August, 1749. (As founder of the Deutschsprachige Gesellschaft, I apologize for the name. It twists its tortuous and uneuphonious way past sundry difficulties, and expresses cautiously what the society is mainly intended to be.)

Dr Joachim Kahn and Dr Peter Munz undertook to organize the celebration. The nearest convenient date we found to be Monday, 15th August. The two doctors picked the *Auerbachskeller*, *Hexenküche* and *Nacht* scenes from *Faust* (numbers V, VI and XVIII) for presentation. This caused me some consternation at first. I was keen to see somebody have a shot at putting the pyrotechnic wizardry of *Auerbachskeller* and *Hexenküche* on the stage, but I was dubious of the wisdom of attempting it with our new and small society, in our first major production, and at the Goethe-Feier to boot. I swallowed my anxiety; and in the event Dr Munz enlisted the kindly and competent aid of the chemistry department, with triumphant results.

In the early stages we ran into trouble from a different quarter. As fast as we collected actors, they melted away again. People were willing, but terribly busy; and the Training College tournament at Auckland clashed with our performance. In desperation we cast about us. Professor Murray, who normally refuses to be lured on to a stage, generously gave way to our importunities. Mrs Allen, deprecating her few months study of German, consented to be a ' Meerkatze ' (lady ape). At a quite late stage a welcome reinforcement came—like lend-lease in wartime—from Wellington Girls' College. Five most unsuitably well-grown and attractive young ladies came up under the guardianship of Miss Garai and were converted into

'kleine Thiere' (little animals). Mrs Louise Henderson made monkey-masks for them.

In a very real sense, Goethe helped to put on his own show, for as news of what we were doing spread, interest and support *jaillissaient* from the University and Town (only the French word expresses it).

And so at last, behind the experienced leadership of Dr Kahn, and the tireless activity of Dr Munz, something like a popular movement bore a dramatic undertaking of no mean proportions towards its consummation. (The small *Garten* scene had been added in the meantime.)

We publicized our activities modestly, and to our surprise about two hundred people came and filled the Little Theatre to watch us.

Dr Danilow introduced the show with a brief talk on Goethe.

The *Auerbachskeller* is a drinking scene, witty and human to start with:

Brander Das liegt an dir. Du bringst ja nichts herbei,
Nicht eine Dummheit, keine Sauerei.

Frosch (Giest ihm sein Bier über den Kopf.)
Da hast du beides.

Brander Doppelt Schwein!

Frosch Ihr wollt es ja, man soll es sein!

(Translation would be futile.)

The four tipplers, Professor Murray, Dr Munz, and Messrs McArthur and Burnett, laboured mightily to put it over, and wrung little more than an occasional murmur from the audience. I suppose only about half the audience really understood it, and they knew the play, and were occupied with nostalgic thoughts about it. I am sure they appreciated the effort, even though a little silently; but I was sorry for our four drinkers. If their acting had a fault, it was that they tippled and squabbled too earnestly, and one good laugh would have eased that slight sense of tension.

Then Mephistopheles brings Faust in to have a look at Leipzig night life. Mr Harry Benda, as Mephistopheles in this scene, sang the Song of the Flea admirably, and Dr Kahn (Faust) rumbled disapprovingly at his bibulous colleagues (Ich hätte Lust nun abzufahren. Let's go, I've had enough of this). The devilish whizz-bangs went off almost exactly to plan, and the scene ended on a livelier note.

From then on I had less impression of the audience's reactions, because as Mephistopheles I was fully occupied on the stage myself. My recollections are of volumes of smoke pumped on to the stage by an enthusiastic assistant with a pair of bellows; of Mrs Allen—the 'eyes' of her costume having wandered off to one side of her face—trying to locate a sieve held up for her to look through by her ape-husband ('Sieh durch das Sieb'); of someone letting off a thing like a roman-candle under my left ear, and causing me to do a most un-mephistophelian leap to one side; of Miss Lucie Halberstam (Gretchen) being very nervous, giving a fine performance, and then breaking her heart unnecessarily because she forgot a line. (Goethe would forgive her; he was not a pedant.) Mr I. D. Anderson, a Stage I student, gave a very fine performance as Valentin.

Most of us were a bit shaky on words, owing to sparse rehearsing under heavy pressure from other work. I hope this didn't show up as badly to the audience as some of us felt it in our own performances.

Anyway, that was our Goethe-Feier, and people seemed to like it.

We have been criticized, mildly, for our choice of scenes, which are said scarcely to represent Goethe. I suppose the only answer is that we weren't representing him, we were just celebrating him. Could one *represent* Goethe in one short evening?

My own misgivings about the choice were pure apprehension, as I have indicated.

When I was asked to write about Goethe my thoughts flew to an extract from Sir David Smith's recent address to the University Senate, which I culled from the *Evening Post* and pigeon-holed for a different purpose. He is reported to have said: ' Our cultural tradition of Humanism, which created an inner unity of the life of our civilization, has broken down because of its failure to assimilate modern science. Yet we must keep science or starve. What is required is the discarding of a cultural view which separates arts from sciences, and the production of a contemporary culture which is the synthesis of what the faculties of arts and science respectively stand for . . .'

I associate Goethe with this quotation, because Goethe was a scientist as well as a superbly great writer of fine literature.

In the first exuberance of thought along these lines, I contemplated writing something like this: ' Goethe would have leapt joyously into the very midst of this problem; in fact he *does* leap into the very midst of it. That is why he is still read to-day . . .' etc.

But this statement suffers from a defect which afflicts many other exhilarating statements. It isn't true. At least, it isn't true enough to be worth maintaining.

Goethe's messianic side is not clear-cut enough to be applied, like a theorem, to individual cases occurring subsequently. Even his parting advice,

> Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
> Den können wir erlösen. (*Faust* II)
>
> (Whoever purposefully strives,
> He shall find salvation.)

seems at once a little too personal and a little too indefinite to mean much nowadays. His great and thoughtful friend Schiller might have had something more pertinent to say, but he was preoccupied with problems of a different nature.

The kind of effortful striving that Goethe meant, is to be seen exemplified in his life, and in the rest of *Faust*. Goethe, in the course of his life, organized fire-brigades, ran mining industries, acted as minister of finance (an unenviable post) to the little state of Weimar. He also wrote superb poetry, very great novels, and (usually not so great) dramas. He also studied the nature of sunlight, wrote a treatise on the relationships between different

parts of plants (leaf, flower, etc.) and established the presence of the intermaxillary bone in the human jaw. He also swam naked in the rivers by moonlight—an unheard-of thing for an eighteenth century German gentleman to do. His administrative work was not phoney, either; he hated 'Unzweckmëssigkeit' (unfitness, inappropriateness), and appears by all accounts to have gone after the ugly old eighteenth century incompetencies like a terrier after a rat.

All this tremendous activity was made possible—so we understand from his physician—by an unusually active and efficient metabolism, fed by a gargantuan appetite. Moreover he lived from 1749 to 1832, which gave him time to develop his many activities.

It is true that his activities were to some extent tainted with dilettantism. But this was an age of dilettantism (on this point more hereafter). Scientists have sometimes complained that he poetised in the realm of science, but he has won some respect in that realm nonetheless.

I, personally, am sure that his success in poetry was largely due to a happy blend of his great natural and educated ability to appreciate and use *form* (characteristic of literature) and his clear, clever, untrammelled *power of observation* (characteristic of the natural sciences). This analysis may be a bit strained, but any analysis of Goethe is apt to be so. One must to start with add the creative fantasy of the poet.

See the result—

> Es schlug mein Herz, geschwind zu Pferde!
> Es war getan fast eh' gedacht;
> Der Abend wiegte schon die Erde,
> Und an den Bergen hing die Nacht;
> Schon stand im Nebelkleid die Eiche,
> Ein aufgetürmter Riese, da,
> Wo Finsternis aus dem Gesträuche
> Mit hundert schwarzen Augen sah. (*Willkommen und Abschied.*)

Who else at this time would have thought of saying such things? Who else would have hopped on a horse and away like that, anyway?—Soldiers, and young men of action perhaps. And who would have seen all that as his breeches hit the saddle? And who else could have found the phrases and poured them hot into a poetic mould like that?

Such things are apt to be sieved out of literature by too much bookishness and too much of the wrong kind of rationalism.

So what then? I think I am already overshooting my allotted space, yet I have scarcely managed to make the outlines of my argument apparent.

Goethe was a man who lived intensely, and his writing followed closely upon the heels of his living. He also loved the natural sciences, which to-day form a full half, if not three-quarters, of our living. Unfortunately it does not seem possible to show that Goethe consciously and to a marked degree enriched his writing from the natural sciences, and to argue from that that we should do the same to an even greater degree. There is little in Goethe to serve as a prototype to Jules Verne or Wells or Aldous Huxley.

Yet in his time Goethe was a great innovator, a great precipitator of new substances hanging suspended in the human spirit of his time.

In these days of increasing scientific specialization—the passing of the dilettante—it is very difficult for the artist and writer to keep full contact with his world; but I think had Goethe been alive now, he would have known how to do something unexpectedly effective about it.

Janet Paul

The Helen Hitchings Gallery in Wellington

A froward retention of Custom is as turbulent a thing as an Innovation.
Francis Bacon

WE HAVE no folk arts, no peasant tradition, yet the evanescent energy of womankind constantly bursts out in new aberrations of handcraft; trays, woven of raffia and pine needles; mantlepiece ornaments from pine cones, gumnuts, shells with varnish and wire; devitalized Kate Greenaway girls stamped on calico aprons and worked with care; and sometimes refinement of colour and variety of embroidery wasted on the commonplace stencilled patterns of tray and supper cloth and tapestry. These are the sort of things which still form leisure activity for women whose hands are freed from knitting and mending family jerseys and socks. This misused energy is based largely on bad teaching (some convents, a few schools only have taught real embroidery or good craft in the past), bad example in the shops and very little better example in local art exhibitions. But the Women's Institutes and W.D.F.U. and Winter Shows responsible for encouraging much fatuous industry may yield to other influences. Schools and community and therapy groups have begun to develop crafts of spinning, weaving and modelling. Some interested people have grown beyond the beginning stages. If their craft is to continue to give them enjoyment and interest they need to experiment, to see what other people are doing and make comparisons, to find out what people think of their work, and to sell their work, not necessarily to make their hobby into a living (very few expect to do that here), but at least to replace the cost of their materials.

It is then the craft workers who most need a clearing house. Very few retailers stock local work (Milne and Choyce in Auckland have occasional displays of Olive Jones and Timaru pottery, and the same may be true of a few Southern shops).

The artists have been served in the past by a few cramped shops and art societies. For the sake of our standards in painting it is as well that the art societies should not have to confuse the success of a show with the number of sales, and for the sake of our artists it is well that the Helen Hitchings Gallery will provide year round display, where those whose work has been too spirited or untraditional for the societies may find a public, and where the serious artist who feels unable to draw on commercial work may have a more regular source of income.

It is unfortunate that the Gallery's position in a back street will make it share in the incestuousness of our intellectual life. The well-designed object will be bought by the already converted, and the general public, on whose lack of taste the importers and retailers blame their displays of shoddy and insipid furniture, china and textiles, will have little chance of drifting in here by accident. Unless the aunts or next-door-neighbours of young artists make an effort to see Pearl's or Janie's work—and having come so far stay to look about the rest of the gallery as well—very few will be surprised into thinking about design for the first time. However, the gallery must necessarily be bound by its finance to a cheap rental. The ordinary business man would as soon be lowered down Mitre Peak by rope as swing his living in the tenuous insecurity of ten per cent. on sale or return. Helen Hitchings has obviously not gone into this for the profit she will make. It is a service from which we hope she will get sufficient to keep both the gallery and herself going.

Virginia Woolf describes in her biography of Roger Fry a similar experiment in the years just before the 1914-8 war. The Omega workshops were more ambitious than a clearing house. A team of artists and craftsmen drawn from those who supplied the workshops were available to take over interior decoration and furnishing for the experimentally-minded wealthy. It is interesting now to look at pictures of their work. Furniture shared the angularity of *art nouveau* and murals of the young Vanessa Bell were often daring for daring's sake. Are we visually in a better period? I think so. But sensibility must needs be coloured by one's intellectual and visual environment, and critical estimate of contemporary work may seem to another generation very like using the right words for the wrong reasons.

The Hitchings Gallery is fortunate in the standard set by the main display, furniture by Ernst Plishke. It has a manner, a style which meets squarely the best of other modern designs in wood illustrated in overseas periodicals. The chairs, couches, coffee tables all share the same distinguishing features; an elegance, a refinement of line and proportion, a general agreement of the parts to the whole. Although our furniture makers here have, in the main, not yet got around to functionalism, they could find in the Hitchings Gallery designs which have absorbed and forgotten the strictly functional. Deep seat, cushioned back, slender arms of polished unstained rimu, all adequately fulfil the function, but there can be no utilitarian reason for rounding the lower outside edge of the arms. That rounding provides an alternation of sharp edges and curved designed solely to give pleasure to the eye. The choice of covering materials, from a heavy lime green linen to nigger brown hand-woven wool, is uniformly pleasing.

Equally agreeable are the dining chairs which give wood the full benefit of its use in contrast to seats made from wide strips of interlaced leather. (The occasionally ragged cutting of the leather was an unnecessary lapse from the good standard of workmanship shown by the cabinet maker.)

The round, heart-rimu coffee tables with three milking-stool legs and a lovely curve from the narrow diameter to wide centre were, to my mind, more successful than the nests of three tables whose elegance verged on fragility, though their juxtaposition of light wood and inlay of black linoleum is very good indeed. But possibly these would appear fragile only to those whose caution compels them to visualize all home furniture under the feet of children.

A simple, two fold screen provided an excellent frame for a printed design by A. R. D. Fairburn. Of all Plishke's work the standard lamp is the least successful. The shade is bad in proportion of its width to the lamp height and in its curve and decoration. It suggests a fussiness which scarcely mates with the bold brass of the stem and base. It is to be hoped that this happy combination of designer, cabinet maker and upholsterer will encourage other designers to send in furniture to the Gallery and give us the opportunity to educate our perception by comparing the good.

With the basis of this furniture Helen Hitchings has exchanged the appearance of a shop for something much nearer to that of a large, comfortable, lived-in room whose owner has an unusually extensive taste for pottery and wall drapes and books on interior decoration. The hand-woven textiles are well displayed and good enough to compare with the collection in the exhibition of British Rural Crafts. Mostly expensive, they vary in price to the surprisingly cheap, but not inferior, cloth made by occupational therapy groups.

The collection of wooden objects—salad bowls large and small, cigarette boxes, cruets, are well-shaped, well-finished and show a nice use of native woods.

The pottery gives a good first impression but stood up not so well to a second examination. One's first reaction was of gratitude to find some pottery which dispensed with vulgar ornamentation and relied on its shape and colour. Generally the shapes were good but some of the pottery degenerated into the arty-crafty. On the whole I found the work of the Dunedin potter, Stephens, the most pleasing, although even there the cups and saucers, good in colour, were clumsy and heavy to handle.

The gallery could be still more useful to those interested in crafts if Helen Hitchings could get an import license for a limited quantity of pottery, furniture, glass and textiles. Only a little of the best Swedish, English and French work in pottery, glass, textiles or unit-furniture, exhibited side by side with our own work, would give us a measuring rod —perhaps chastening but certainly necessary if craftsmanship is to develop through informed self-criticism.

T. H. Scott

The Frances Hodgkins Controversy

'The rejection of the offer of a picture painted by the famous New Zealand-born artist Frances Hodgkins by the Christchurch City Council, after it had been purchased for them by public subscription, has come as the biggest shock in New Zealand art circles for a long time.'

The Evening Post, Wellington, June 23, 1949.

I

It is over a year since a group of six paintings by the late Frances Hodgkins arrived in Christchurch. The presence of these paintings in this country has excited those interested in art, and in Christchurch at least, the general public has been led to take more than usual interest in the art affairs of the city. The events of this last year may some day be seen as a chapter in the history of art in New Zealand, certainly its history in Christchurch.

An anthropologist from the M'Bonga-Bongans,* coming upon us for the first time during this year, would most certainly have decided he had arrived at an appropriate time to study our art, and its place in our society. And he would probably have learned something about us as a people from the reactions to the presence of these pictures which he observed.

He could not of course be blamed if he imagined at first that he was witnessing the interest aroused by the welcome home of the works of a prodigal artist of this outpost of western culture, one who had unfortunately died in another land. For were these not works from the hand of a native painter, who had lived and worked in Europe, to be acclaimed there for her achievement among European artists? And these six works, were they not in the manner that had brought her her greatest fame, reaching at last the community of her origin where only a few of her works in an earlier style lay scattered in private homes and public art-places?

But, from the newspaper reports, and the correspondence that broke out soon after the pictures arrived and that revived from time to time, he must have sensed the scowls and counter-grimaces, and noticed the earnest invocations of the beliefs and even the religious sources of our society. He would conclude that the clamour was not a welcome but a demonstration of hostility. Could it be that this off-shoot of western society had, in the vigour of its youth, cast off the cultural trappings of its origins? Rooted in a new environment and exposed to strange stimuli, had it perhaps burst forth with a new art of its own, one more appropriate to its fresh experience

*Assuming of course that the M'Bonga-Bongans (invented by Dr Crowther of Canterbury University College) practise the queer custom of studying the customs of other people . . .

of life? And was it of such a kind that the foolish child who goes abroad becomes tainted with the anachronistic art of a past age and an older and human-soiled continent?

However, as our M'Bonga-Bongan anthropologist's ears sharpened to the intricacies of our ways, he would be intrigued by the fact that, for their behaviour when confronted with these pictures, the high-priests of local art were accused by some of being lovers of 'Victorian art' (or art which displayed a 'Victorian mentality'), and that, because of their domination, the public art-places were full of art of this kind. And he would have noted that a man of the arts from the birthplace of this same Victorian art was quoted as saying that a bonfire should be made of the whole public collection.* In face of this he would perhaps be forced to the conclusion that here was an outpost standing fast in an effort to halt an 'unfortunate' modern tendency that had developed in the old world—an heretical desertion of the traditional forms, a decadent and troubled art in troubled times, reflecting morbidity and lack of form . . . But when he found that the accusers of the high-priests represented a body of opinion vehemently supporting this very development, he would be hard put to it to decide what was really afoot. He would find it baffling to determine whether or not these people too had sickened with this new malady (being perhaps young and maladjusted), or whether they (again being young) were not in fact in revolt against those who preserved a back-water of art out of touch with the experience of the culture as a whole.

He might even conclude at this stage that the New Zealanders apparently had no sense of proportion, and that this was, after all, just another ridiculous human squabble, in which it was difficult for anyone (especially someone not in the swim) to maintain an interest or keep track of the issues. He would probably take himself sadly and soberly away —after all he could study this kind of thing just as suitably and with less discomfort at home.

II

From the point of view of the issues of art in New Zealand, it is hardly profitable to view the reactions to the Hodgkins paintings with such complete detachment—as if those issues did not matter. Nor is it any more profitable to take sides immediately and pass another opinion on the rightness or wrongness of the decision of the by-laws committee of the Christchurch City Council, acting on the advice of its advisory committee. When the City Council finally 'respectfully declined' to accept the gift painting *Pleasure Garden* for the city's Robert McDougall Gallery, this was simply the climax in a controversy that had its beginnings much earlier. The editor of *Landfall* (September 1949) referred to this controversy as 'the great art war,' which 'raged in Christchurch most of the winter'. Even if scarcely a 'great art war,' which hardly could be said to have 'raged' (except perhaps in a few earnest breasts), the nature of the interest

*In fact a misquotation: Bernard Shaw's remarks about the Auckland Gallery.

taken in these paintings is sufficiently illuminating to be worth looking at for the sake of the light it throws on ourselves—on our tastes, interests, and some of our attitudes.

The interest in the six Frances Hodgkins paintings has centred round two events: the decision by the council of the Canterbury Society of Arts not to purchase any of these paintings, which it had obtained on approval, and the subsequent refusal by the Christchurch City Council to accept one of them when it was offered as a gift to the city. Though they are closely and significantly connected, there are certain differences between the two events which makes it interesting to discuss them separately. The issues involved were seen, by some at least, to be different; thus the controversy shifted its emphasis. As it warmed up in the later stages the real issues that had been involved all along became clearer.

The main facts surrounding the first decision (the decision not to purchase) are simple enough: early last year the council of the Canterbury Society of Arts asked the British Council to send to the Society a selection of Frances Hodgkins' paintings. The intention was to purchase one 'if it saw fit'. In October the Society's council decided by a majority not to purchase any of the six paintings it received. A second meeting of the Council, held after the comments of members of the Society had been obtained, reached the same decision as the first. The paintings were pronounced not to be good examples of the artist's best work; the council decided not to purchase 'but to use the funds [which had been voted] more wisely'.

But the press reports of statements on the decision revealed sharp differences of opinion. And the discussion that took place in the correspondence columns of the Christchurch *Press* was conducted from the very first letters in the spirit of controversy. Two members of the Society of Arts started the ball rolling when they rose to the defence of that body with a letter calculated to refute 'the suggestion . . . made that the Society does not wish to purchase any paintings by this artist.' The letter went on: 'So far as the artist members we have spoken to are concerned, this is completely untrue. We are eager and determined to procure one or more of her works; but we wish it to be equal to or better than those examples already in private collections in this country.' But in the staccato correspondence which followed, those who opposed the decision were not content with this as a fair statement of fact. The decision not to purchase 'any of the Frances Hodgkins paintings' was taken to mean 'any Frances Hodgkins paintings' in a way that no doubt exasperated those who were trying to make this point clear and who, it seemed, were a little edgy on the matter. By most of those opposing it, the decision was believed to arise not from discrimination but from a lack of appreciation, more—an attitude of hostility not only to the paintings of Frances Hodgkins, but to modern painting in general. Letter after letter took this for granted. Many therefore tilted against this 'attitude' or 'outlook' believed to lie behind the council's decision not to purchase. Many who wrote thus devoted themselves to establishing the magnitude of Frances Hodgkins' fame. One mentioned for instance the 'formidable list of leading museums and

collectors in England which have already acquired at least one of her pictures.' One, after looking at the paintings, felt ' compelled to write ' in glowing terms. Several stressed the danger of not having a chance to purchase better, one even saying that this was the ' first and last opportunity to purchase any of Frances Hodgkins' later work at the current price,' another said that the ' rejection of these beautiful paintings is a tragic loss.'

The same correspondent referred to the ' battle of ideals ' which ' must occur in each generation'. Not all correspondents said this in so many words, most addressing themselves to the world directly and aggressively in the kind of private language which the reader, if he isn't in at the beginning, hasn't a hope of following, and not always even then. But it is clear that most of those expressing dissatisfaction at the council's decision regarded themselves as participants in such a battle. One correspondent pointed out that ' Young artists and the public are educated by the work exhibited in our limited local collections,' and went on to say that ' The Society of Arts council apparently wishes this influence to include nothing later than the time of Queen Victoria, unless it refers to the mentality of that period.' Another wrote: ' The dead are unaware of the flower growing above them, so can we expect more from the Canterbury Art Society than we receive, the smell of death.' Yet another claimed that the decision was ' truly a reflection of their [the members of the council of the Art Society] mentalities.'

But if one correspondent felt ' compelled to write ' in praise of the six paintings, another, after having ' hurried to the Art Gallery ' while the paintings were still to be seen, apparently felt equally compelled to write of his unhappy experience: ' That Miss Hodgkins was sick at the time of painting is very obvious, for only a mind so ill at ease could see pumpkins floating in the air, apples with a brown halo on them, and Adam and Eve stretched out in a garden dressed in pink flannelette . . .' Another claimed that these paintings were examples of the painter's ' third and worst period,' the artist being at the time, said the writer, ' a sufferer and by no means herself.' Yet, he said, ' Christchurch harbours some who seem quite content to accept these discards of England.'

Participants tended then to write extravagantly in admiration of Frances Hodgkins, or of these paintings—or equally extravagantly in condemnation. Moreover, they usually wrote as if ' modern art ' had completely displaced ' Victorian art,' or should have, as if ' Victorian art ' was dead, or should be —or as if ' modern art ' was superior just because it was contemporary. Both sides tended to assume that the other really had no case at all, that its own view in art was the only proper one. Many of those opposing the decision, and thinking of the whole affair as a ' battle of ideals,' tended to dismiss the Society of Arts and its efforts out of hand. On the other hand, the member of that Society who in conjunction with another member had written the letter which opened the controversy, did not see fit, in her subsequent letter of reply which closed the *Press* correspondence, to treat seriously the charges made. Apparently she did not see them as charges at all, dismissing the correspondents rather high-handedly and apologizing for having ' stirred up so much bad temper and [having] called forth so many near-personal remarks.'

Consequently, there was little sober examination of the main points at issue: whether these paintings were or were not good examples of Frances Hodgkins' work, and anyway, if not, whether better examples were available. Nor did anyone point out clearly the difficulty of deciding whether these were in fact good examples. Quite apart from differences of taste or standard, how can we, here in New Zealand, judge the whole range of her work, especially when examples of her later work are almost entirely unrepresented? Apart from the six works in question, almost no one taking part in the controversy had actually seen any of this later work, except in reproduction. But considerations of this kind did not prevent some from urging impulsively that one or more simply must be purchased (and they did not always base their case upon the fact that the paintings had been selected by the Fine Arts Committee of the British Council); nor others from urging just as impulsively and certainly in the opposite direction. It was pointed out that the fame of a painter did not necessarily warrant the purchase of just any of her paintings. Again, the principal argument for the validity and representativeness of these works was rarely, and never tellingly, used. The one or two references to the circumstances of selection were lost in the general outburst.

In correspondence, in press statements, in private conversation, the main points at issue were lost in the flurry of art politics. In fact, if either 'side' ventured on to the crucial issues, the other 'side' seemed to behave as if a stick was being lifted in readiness to beat it.

Though such controversies touch only occasionally and ineffectively on what appear to be the points at issue, the differences of opinion which they air apparently create the issue in the first place. The protagonists of Frances Hodgkins, at least those acquainted with Canterbury Society of Arts affairs, were well aware of these differences of opinion. The Society had certainly authorized its council to ask the British Council to send out a selection of her paintings—but there had been considerable discussion of the recommendation. One member of the council, Archibald F. Nicoll, had asked: 'Are we to buy a Frances Hodgkins simply because she was born in New Zealand, instead of a Rothenstein or an Augustus John?' He went on to say: 'We must remember that we are a small society and that our picture purchasing fund has other uses than supplying New Zealand with notable paintings.' He pointed out too that in her later years Frances Hodgkins was working for a dealer, saying that 'we are going to pay a fancy price to a dealer if we choose to buy one of her paintings.' The movers of the motion, Alan C. Brassington and R. S. Lonsdale, had however pointed out the 'intrinsic' (as well as 'historic') value of Frances Hodgkins' work, basing this view in the main on the judgment of overseas art critics. Their move was part of a plea to secure more of the work of modern artists. Mr Brassington subsequently pointed out that they had 'every reason to believe that they (the six paintings) were the best available at those relatively low prices.'

Mr Nicoll's view, and that of others questioning the recommendation, appears straightforward enough. Likewise that of those who made or defended the decision not to purchase one of the six paintings when they

arrived. They claimed—or at least most of them claimed—not to oppose modern art, but only to oppose bad examples of it, not to oppose Frances Hodgkins and even to admire her, but to want a good example of her work. But their view was by many regarded as far from straightforward. And those who so believed considered they had ample grounds for their suspicion. Mr Nicoll for instance had added that in his opinion it was possible for the Society to buy one of Frances Hodgkins' works in New Zealand at much less than £200 (the amount originally voted for the purchase). At the meeting of the council of the Society of Arts at which the decision not to purchase was made, a motion in this direction was moved. But the works available in New Zealand (though no concrete evidence was given that there are such) could only be early works in a fairly conventional style. It is in her later works that Frances Hodgkins developed the highly personal style which led critics overseas to recognize her as a painter of vision and to place her in the vanguard of modern movements in art. In view of the fact that prominent members of the council of the Society of Arts (including Mr Nicoll) had openly stated their opposition to modern art, this suggestion of a local purchase was regarded as significant.

The remark that Frances Hodgkins' paintings are in the hands of a dealer and their prices therefore ' fancy ' was considered to be a red herring. Most of her paintings on the market may be owned by the Lefèvre Gallery, but then most paintings in Britain (at least those of established artists) change hands through such firms of dealers, which employ expert staff.

Further, the motion to secure a Hodgkins from overseas had not been implemented with enthusiasm. And when the paintings arrived, at least one member of the council had regarded them as ' revolting and degenerate,' the improper outpourings of a disordered and morbid mind. Members had said: ' Pack them up and send them back.' The decision not to purchase was secured by a narrow margin (and without the vote of the absent member, Mrs Margaret Frankel, who—visiting Britain—had been instrumental in finally securing the despatch of the paintings to the Society in Christchurch).

Again, officials of the Society sought to preserve a peculiar secrecy about its behaviour, and even about the presence of the paintings. At the second meeting of the council, press representatives were excluded, against the wishes of certain members. The six paintings were shown with the Group Show (which was held in the Society's Gallery) for the benefit of Art Society members. But they were accompanied by a notice saying they must not be mentioned in any press review. The facts given by an official of the Society, as justifying the notice, were incorrect. There was what can only be called a dog-in-the-mangerish move to return the paintings to England immediately, in the face of requests that they should be shown in other centres. Did the Society, it was asked, fear that someone else might be foolish enough to buy one, or did it fear that such a purchase would indicate that the worth of the paintings was not in as much doubt as it had said?

The attitude behind these moves, and behind the decision, was believed by many to be one of hostility to modern art, and opposition to those who sought to sponsor it. At a meeting of the council subsequent to the decision, one member, Mr Lonsdale, spoke out sharply against this attitude.

He described the McDougall Gallery as 'a badly arranged museum of Victorian art,' going on to say that the Society of Arts 'on all practical points was dominated by teachers and former teachers of the School of Art.' Those teachers 'had always had an eye to what one used to call politely an economic proposition, saleability to the general public.' Some higher educational and independent authority was needed to break that vicious circle, he added. The Society controlled the Art Gallery.

This meeting closed the first stage of the controversy over the Hodgkins paintings. At it the crowning event took place. Mrs Frankel and Messrs Brassington and Lonsdale, the three members who had been most active in sponsoring the purchase of a Hodgkins painting, were voted off the council. It was a small meeting and the vote appears to have been organized. At least one member is reported to have said: 'We must get rid of the reds.'

It is clear that the differences of opinion raised by the presence of the Hodgkins pictures are not only deep, but of long standing. Some of those opposing the decision not to purchase apparently felt themselves in opposition not only to entrenched and institutionalized opinion, but to opinion that was prepared to maintain its hold and secure its position against all opposition. Those who opposed the established views regarded the incident of the paintings as an opportunity to air the whole matter, to drag it out from behind the scenes of art politics into the open.

III

Meantime Mrs Frankel (now ex-member of the council of the Canterbury Society of Arts) returned from Britain. *The Press* carried comments by her on recent developments in art overseas, and a letter in which she commented on the decision discussed in the previous section. 'If the Canterbury Society of Arts genuinely wanted to buy "an example of Frances Hodgkins' best work" it missed an excellent opportunity.' She pointed out that 'Mrs Somerville [of the Fine Arts Committee of the British Council had] selected for Christchurch a representative collection of the latest and, according to experts, finest work of Frances Hodgkins,' and added: 'This, I repeat, was not good enough for the Canterbury Society of Arts; it turned down all six of them.' In the same letter she made an offer of a donation 'towards the purchase for Christchurch of *Pleasure Garden*,' one of the six paintings. The editor of *The Press* agreed to receive further donations: the required ninety-four guineas was quickly obtained. Meantime the pictures had visited Dunedin. The council of the Dunedin Gallery also decided not to avail itself of the opportunity to purchase. But one picture was privately purchased there also for presentation to the Gallery. So that in the face of official refusals to purchase (by the Dunedin Art Gallery council for the Dunedin Gallery, by the council of the Canterbury Society of Arts for the Society's collection in Christchurch) paintings were privately bought in both centres. They were offered as gifts to the two cities, 'gifts which,' Charles Brasch remarked in *Landfall* (June 1949), 'whatever their feelings, the councils could hardly refuse.' Mr Brasch however was wrong, as were many others—including the Christchurch donors. The painting presented

to the Dunedin Gallery was indeed accepted and hung. *Pleasure Garden*, the gouache purchased by thirty-nine subscribers and offered to the City of Christchurch, was rejected by the by-laws committee of the City Council, acting on the advice of its advisory committee.

At this, open controversy flared up again. This time, however, its centre was not within the Society of Arts. It was much more clearly between those who supported the Society and those who opposed it. For the three members of the City Council's advisory committee, Archibald Nicoll, R. Wallwork and Cecil Kelly, were all prominent members of the council of the Society of Arts. It appears that they were elected to the advisory committee by this council about fourteen years ago. And among the leading donors of the picture were two of the three recently voted off the council of that Society. Thus, either in fact, or in people's minds, the City Council decision to reject the gift painting was an official and public implementation and endorsement of Art Society taste and policy. Those who deplored the decision and supported the donors supported 'modern art' even more unequivocally now against that taste and policy.

There seem to be two main reasons for this shift of emphasis. In the first place, many more people than those interested in the original controversy now took part in it, drawn in by the spate of publicity, and themselves adding to it. Thus many who passed an opinion on the gift painting were not interested in the intricacies of the issues involved. Coming in at this late hour, they saw the issues simply. 'Is this kind of thing good or bad? Do I like it or don't I? Should we have it or shouldn't we?'

In the second place: the issues involved in a refusal to purchase are not quite the same as those involved in the refusal of a gift painting. At least, the reasons which may on the surface be plausible explanations for the first refusal are not necessarily so when merely repeated in the face of the changed circumstances of the second.

The newspaper controversy was carried on in the vein of the earlier one, except that it was even more animated: the characteristics of the first reached new heights in the second. Some correspondents did attempt to assess soberly the point at issue; or at least, protagonists on one side or the other did draw attention to serious considerations which they believed those holding the opposite view had left out of account. A great deal of the correspondence however was deliciously absurd and extravagant. 'O,' defending the rejection, might have been Herbert Spencer himself: 'It is an altogether healthy state of things when a decision is made to discard and destroy. All life is trial and error and the error part must be destroyed that a new trial may begin. Even God in this world of creation has discarded types of uncouth animals and queer trees, so why not allow a society to prune out something, that pretends to be a picture and is not.' 'Beauty in Art' was 'relieved' at the decision: 'Is it going to help the world in its present state to look at a drawing that is revolting? Would the people who uphold these horrors marry a woman whose foot was on the end of her arm, or whose one eye was in the middle of her forehead?' 'Pertinens' sought a theological explanation of this wondrous business, and thought *Ecclesiastes*, vii, 29 appropriate: 'Lo, this only have I found,

that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.' 'Sociologist' wrote wisely but perhaps no less confusingly of 'a society such as ours,' of 'old patterns' and 'new forms' that 'are still nebulous,' of beauty that is 'implicit not explicit.' One gained the impression that there must be a race of correspondents who wait around for issues to take up and put in general terms according to their own particular philosophy. Is it their mission in life to provide comic relief or to confuse? They succeeded in doing both in this case.

But perhaps what confused most was the impulsiveness, the aggressiveness that led so many correspondents again into extravagances of praise or condemnation—of Frances Hodgkins, or of 'modern art,' or of 'Victorian art.' Perhaps the personal involvement that many seemed to feel accounted for this. Perhaps the opposition they sensed led people to display a certainty they could hardly feel, to write with a sharpness and hostility which, acting as an irritant, provoked dogmatism on both sides. 'Citizen' need not perhaps be taken seriously: 'Having had an opportunity to see the rejected picture, I have been left wondering as to 1. Why it is called a picture? 2. In what way it resembles a garden? 3. Where the pleasure is? It is to the art world what the National Party is to politics—just a jumble.' But more reflective correspondents on both sides wrote not only uncharitably and intolerantly, but with bitterness. It may be argued that only by attacking vigorously can the changes be rung and progress be achieved. Unfortunately, in this case smugness and certainty, perhaps fanned or even provoked by opposition, hardened into stubbornness.

It is hard to decide when courage in maintaining a personal point of view passes over into pig-headedness. It is perhaps unfortunate but not disastrous when only the individual suffers. But the failure to realize that personal certainties may only be points of view, that one's cherished beliefs may be based on prejudices obvious to others—this had special consequences in the controversy in question. For here an advisory committee in authority was making a decision affecting a city. Those in a position of authority because of their expert knowledge would appear to have at least two special responsibilities in the way they use that authority. One is to be scrupulous that their judgments are free from any hint of antagonism, pig-headedness, or the 'politics' of their field. The other is to avoid at all costs any inclination to certainty. Can they afford to ignore any body of opinion which opposes theirs? Where there is doubt and difference they must surely bring to bear sufficient vision and humility to allow other points of view and different tastes to influence their decisions. Surely they dare not exercise their authority to brush aside other opinion.

In this instance at any rate, it is difficult to credit the advisory committee, which decides what the public of Christchurch shall see in the city art gallery, with this kind of approach to their task. It should be remembered that one member, Mr Wallwork, favoured the acceptance of the picture. But as a committee, while claiming to have known Frances Hodgkins' work for forty years and to hold the artist in high esteem, they claimed 'to be able to discriminate amongst her works of varying standards and think it most unfortunate that this particular example, *Pleasure Garden*,

of all her work, should have been the one offered as a gift to the city's collection. The committee had no option but to advise the council against its acceptance, deeming it unworthy both of Frances Hodgkins and of the McDougall Gallery.' A letter written to the *New Zealand Listener* by Mr P. D'E. Hodgkins (a brother of Frances Hodgkins) was quoted as endorsing this view: 'The exhibition of some of my late sister's more modern work I consider both unjust to the artist and to the public.' One member, Cecil Kelly, commenting on *Pleasure Garden*, said, 'The tone is not good, the colour is not good, and the composition is all over the place. A child could do it.'

The advisory committee seemed to remain deaf to the kind of considerations they could reasonably be expected to have taken into account. They remained unmoved by protests that this painting was after all one of the six selected by the Fine Arts Committee of the British Council, and that three of the six had indeed been included in exhibitions of contemporary British art abroad, sponsored by the British Council. (*Pleasure Garden* was not one of these, having only just been released from a private estate. But it found high favour with the member of the Fine Arts Committee most familiar with Frances Hodgkins' work, and was immediately included in the selected six as 'typical'.) Yet, apparently, the judgment of the British Council is trusted in other matters; it selected and sponsored the visit to this country of the Wakefield Collection of contemporary British art, which was praised by the Society and by official city dignitaries. The British Council is also being entrusted with the assembling of the collection to be shown here at the centenary of Canterbury. There is no suggestion that it may not be able to select the best available. The English critic Eric Newton, whose praise for Frances Hodgkins has frequently been called in by local supporters to back up their case, was accused by the advisory committee of the City Council of writing nonsense. This may or may not be so. Experts notoriously differ, and are given to extravagances of judgment. Those who hold to the view that *Pleasure Garden* is unworthy of Frances Hodgkins, or of inclusion in the City collection, are entitled to do so. But they should remember that they are pitting their judgment against that of persons who certainly must be more familiar with the large body of Frances Hodgkins' later work, and who are more directly in touch with the currents of contemporary European art, and opinions about that art. 'Whim-Wham,' abroad, writing a *Home Thought: From the National Gallery*, made fun of this complacency in *The Press:*

> El Greco's these, where Light perpetual darts.
> I dreamed they travelled to the Antipodes,
> Where several Societies of Arts
> (In self-defence) pronounced them Forgeries.
> Some gazed and sickened. A discerning few,
> More tolerant or intrepid than the rest,
> Allowed them genuine (on a closer View),
> But positively not the Master's best.

How is this to be explained except as a want of imagination, an indefensible smugness betraying lack of humility? How otherwise explain the committee's attitude to a deputation representing the donors of the gift, which the City Council received. In their report to the City Council, giving the grounds for the recommended rejection of *Pleasure Garden*, why should the advisory committee have gone out of their way to argue, with superficial plausibility, that 'the deputation's appeal [to the Council] follows a highly organized campaign of propaganda by a small coterie wishing to substitute its view for that of the advisory committee and that of an overwhelming majority of the public and artists of Canterbury'? The assumption seems to be that to label something 'propaganda' is to rule it out of court, and that these people had in fact no right to oppose the advisory committee, certainly not to such lengths. They seemed to be affronted at being challenged, and to dismiss opposition as restricted to a 'coterie'. It is difficult to see how a cautious minded committee could fail to recognize that there were more people interested than members of a coterie, and that behind their opponents' argument was more than mere misguided enthusiasm, prejudice, stubbornness or offended dignity. And is the number wanting the picture the point at issue? Those pressing for the acceptance of *Pleasure Garden* (including many responsible and well-known critics and others connected with the arts) were merely asking for the inclusion of a picture in a collection—without jeopardizing the purchase or inclusion of any other picture.

To the argument that if a painting is not worthy of purchase, it is not worth accepting as a gift, there would seem to be one answer, so obvious it hardly needs stating: When a painter is of special interest to a community, as Frances Hodgkins is to ours, is it sufficient merely to have an 'example' of her work? Should not as big a collection as possible be obtained—even of lesser pieces when they can be gained easily and with little expense? Do we fail to treasure first drafts of a major poet's work (and all his 'unsuccessful' pieces), when they have been preserved? For do we not want to understand our artist, and thus appreciate better his highest achievements? Or do we wish to perpetuate the popular illusion that genius is superhuman and never fails? No gallery in New Zealand can afford to reject any work of a major artist. Do libraries act in this way? It is mainly considerations of finance and of space, not high aesthetic standards, that force galleries to exercise extreme scrupulousness in the purchase of paintings.

Yet the advisory committee and its defenders remained for practical purposes oblivious to all such arguments. In this they seemed to be doing more than simply carrying on the logic of an earlier decision. They seemed to be determined to maintain, even to the point of absurdity and pettiness, their opposition to a group whose opinions and attitudes they evidently disliked. A remark (in the report previously referred to) that the number of subscribers to the purchase of the picture was 'significantly small', was foolish. The subscription list closed when the required amount was obtained. A hint also made in the report, that the newspaper publicity had been 'managed' by *The Press*, was quickly taken up by that paper, which pointed

out in a sub-leader that it had merely reflected public interest in the rejection.

When it is remembered that most modern art critics are doubtful of any eternal canons whereby works of art may be judged, that 'established' standards are in never-ending transition and thus no final guide, that as a race we may well be in the infancy of exploration into the potentialities of human experience and appreciation—then it is obvious that there is indeed no room for certainty. This means that in art—perhaps most of all in art, where individuals are communicating their very experience of life, unending tolerance and patience is needed, and a deliberate attempt to understand other tastes and points of view, a reluctance to pass final opinions. Above all, one expects in artists in authority a hesitancy to be didactic. We may or may not deplore their opinions and taste. But their attitude to other opinion may with justice be deplored. For in this case, where there has been deep difference of opinion, they have had the kind of advantage which can easily be dangerous. It is not my purpose to assert here that one side or the other was right in its judgment, or more admirable in its taste. It is however important to note that justice has been the will of the stronger, irrespective of any other justification—whereas the justice demanded was no more than the recognition of a point of view by the acceptance of a gift.

Some statements of opinion did appeal on the grounds of tolerance for the acceptance of the gift painting, even while perhaps disliking modern art, or Frances Hodgkins, or *Pleasure Garden* in particular. A letter to the Mayor of Christchurch, signed by sixty-nine members of the Canterbury College staff, approached the matter in this spirit. There were many (though less frequently among artists and critics) who, from the side-line as it were, remarked on the absurdity of the whole incident or the lack of sense of proportion in the rejection, on (as *The Press* put it in a sub-leader) 'an act that must seem rather arbitrary now and might even look ridiculous in time.'

IV

The extract quoted from the report of the advisory committee contained a reference to 'the public of Canterbury'. Some of those opposing the acceptance of the gift painting referred to the 'sanity' of the common man's opinion, his nose for the morbid or perverted, and frequently referred to his dislike of *Pleasure Garden* as final grounds for its rejection. The public interest taken in *Pleasure Garden* is illuminating from several points of view: an examination of it makes nonsense of appeals to public taste and is disturbing for the attitudes it reveals.

With the rejection of the painting, publicity was considerable, and the public entered the controversy with gusto.

The Press carried a statement from the leading subscriber, Mrs Frankel, announcing the rejection. It published comments by a member of the City Council's advisory committee, a photograph of *Pleasure Garden*, and

the further correspondence already described. It reported the reception by the Mayor of a telegram from persons prominent in art circles in Wellington, expressing surprise at the rejection and the hope that the decision was not final. It reported the letter signed by members of the staff of Canterbury College urging the acceptance of the picture. *Canta*, the students' paper of the College, printed comments and an article, and published a photograph of the painting. By now many of the details connected with the life of Frances Hodgkins and her work, and with the circumstances of her paintings' appearance in Christchurch, had become known in one way or another. Coinciding with this publicity the painting was displayed in a local art-dealer's shop, then for some days in the corner window of a prominent city retailer, and later in the staff room of Canterbury College. The picture was examined by many vaguely interested in art, and was glanced at by a good many more, either by accident or out of curiosity.'

Pleasure Garden was now in the air. It crept into local humour: 'Let's talk about something that isn't controversial—like Frances Hodgkins'. A student asked a lecturer who was describing Plato's views on censorship: 'What would he have done about Frances Hodgkins?' When (in shops, meetings and on occasions generally) one steered the conversation round to the question of the picture, there would be a sudden gleam of interest. A great many people had heard of *Pleasure Garden* or Frances Hodgkins. Some had even been curious enough to go out of their way to take a quick look at the picture. Others only 'saw it in the paper'. But the majority were not only ready to pass an opinion, but were eager to, almost felt obliged to. Some said, in substance: 'I don't know much about this sort of thing,' but not many would leave it at that. It became almost a fashion to say: 'I know what I like.' The impression gained was that this was at once a profession of ignorance and an assertion of the belief that they really knew what they liked, and that 'what I like' was a suitable substitute for more sophisticated and less subjective standards. Those who had no views often manufactured them, usually relating them to their other interests or their abilities: 'Now I'm interested in photography,' or 'I was pretty good at drawing myself . . .' Some even 'like a good picture, but . . . ' Some justified their reaction by some half-understood or hearsay fact about Frances Hodgkins or modern painting which they had picked up: 'I reckon it'd look better the other way up, but they say she was mad anyway.' Being humorous at the expense of painter or picture was popular. But, as a commentator writing in *The Press* wrote: ' . . . Many were indifferent . . . the middle-aged woman . . . gazing fixedly at *Pleasure Garden*, said to her friend: "Pains in the back. There's a terrible lot of it about." . . . "Picture?" . . . said a chic, shapely girl in black, "in the window? I wasn't looking. I was busy looking for shoes."'

Some of the most exaggerated and immoderate comments and denunciations came from the general public. Half understood facts were bandied about, almost with glee, as if such facts put them 'in the know' and explained everything. Thus even anti-Semitism had an airing: the argument was put into racial terms and enthusiasm said to have been engineered

by the Jews: 'An artist chap told me that the Jews are behind this. A Jew has bought up a lot of her paintings and wants to get them all sold.'

Whether people were indifferent, or ready to glance and comment, or even make exaggerated pronouncements, what was perhaps most striking was the enormous gulf between the daily interests of the majority (including many with higher or specialized education), and the few with a developed interest in the arts. The advanced B.A. student who said: 'The people who bought the painting ought to have to live with it,' and who went on to say, approvingly: 'When you went into the shop you just followed the laughs to find the picture,' might have been expected to know better. Indeed, it seems that, as Raymond Mortimer remarked (*New Statesman and Nation*, March 19, 1949): 'To the uncultivated, of whatever class, modern painting is merely a joke.'

But there was present something more than what may with justice be called 'ignorance,' or at least highly circumscribed interests. Reactions were characterized again by a lack of humility, a failure to realize that those interested might be different rather than wrong or peculiar, or that a lack of knowledge or experience in themselves could account for their own impressions. But the intolerant gave perhaps the best clue of all to something that seemed to be behind the reactions of many—particularly those who seemed to glory in philistinism. When a man said, cleaning the window in front of the picture: 'Fancy anyone buying that—I reckon they ought to have their heads read,' he seemed to reveal a common fear and uneasiness —the fear of something not understood, and uneasiness at 'this business,' as if a cult had been discovered in their midst. Another man, also expert in a highly technical field, apparently felt the danger of such a cult, and felt too that people ought to be protected. He would, if he had his way, 'debar this kind of thing.' 'People shouldn't have this kind of thing put in front of them, it's dangerous.' He was judging from the point of view of his own special field which put a premium on exact representation; his ignorance of the nature and function of art he admitted to be abysmal. Yet in his intolerance and limitation he was prepared to be dictatorial.

Among the more cultivated, there were many who failed to see all this as a schism in our social life, and to realize that a host of people may possess potentialities of appreciation and experience which, being developed, might bridge the gap. Many of them rather put it down to a public dumbness (either in their remarks or in a sage nodding of the head, or in making jokes at the public's expense). In many ways they showed their interests and attitudes to be indeed those of a cult. Mixed with an expressed disgust that more people did not share their interest in art, was often a satisfaction that more did not. Smugness was not a prerogative of the uninitiated.

It is true that several writers did attempt to draw attention to the lack of informed public sensibility. They tried to explain the motives of modern painters and the absence of photographic representation. And it was remarked too that after all, as 'modern painting' goes, *Pleasure Garden* is not a 'difficult' picture. It only seems difficult and unrewarding to those who know almost nothing of the language of art, or know only that of so-called

' representational ' art. But there seemed to be, in general, little real concern that more people could not pass an informed opinion (which way does not so much matter). In fact, as mentioned, lack of public approval of *Pleasure Garden* could be referred to as justification for its rejection.

Might it not be argued that we should think of our art gallery as being like a library, a place where people may widen their horizons, sharpen their sensibilities, and deepen their insight into life, by grasping through works of art the more intense experience or profound thought of others? But such a view makes of local pride in art galleries and museums a joke, a gesture of ignorant self-importance, in cultivated and uncultivated alike. The attitude to painting is trivial. Perhaps it is not only trivial, but complacent.

Perhaps, indeed, it reflects a complacency towards life, a lack of capacity to be excited by it, a lack of inclination or wish to explore. May it be that behind this, as behind the intolerance and apparent certainty, is really a deep emotional insecurity and the fear of disturbance which insecurity breeds?. Perhaps we are not then merely insensitive to the products of imagination, but fearful of the imagination itself?

REVIEWS

MAN ALONE. John Mulgan. *Paul's Book Arcade Ltd., Hamilton.* 10s. 6d.

AFTER two good and capable reviews of this novel, the first a radio broadcast by John Reece Cole, the second by James Bertram in *The Listener*, it might seem that no new ground could be broken. Both reviewers, however, dwelt mainly on the social implications of the book. One may consider briefly its more subjective aspect.

Despite the deceptive simplicity of Mulgan's style, *Man Alone* is a novel of highly complex structure. Two levels of thought, two themes almost, combine, contrast, and interpenetrate. From the viewpoint of social analysis, Johnson, the dour English immigrant, is a blank cheque on whom the post-war depression years write themselves corrosively; a mirror of the times, reflecting with equal detachment the Auckland riots or the squalid grind of a mortgaged cow farm. Mulgan has shown acumen in selecting a non-indigenous hero, since this approach allows him to present features of this country familiar to New Zealanders in a fresh and unfamiliar light. But the theme from which the title draws its significance is ultimately not concerned with ' social ' issues. It concerns rather Johnson's personal isolation, his place on the outskirts of society, perpetually a spectator. When he does at length acquire a kind of status, it is the inverted status of a criminal. One is reminded inevitably of Camus' *The Outsider*. But Mulgan, unlike Camus, has no ideological axe to grind. The novel

develops organically from Johnson's personal dilemma. When he finally joins a volunteer contingent to fight on the Leftist side in the Spanish War, the decision seems to spring as much from purely personal as from political motives. It is simply another move made by that lonely and enigmatic man in his private war with Fate.

In the first chapters the story is slow-moving and discursive. One feels that Mulgan has not yet penetrated to the heart of his theme. At this stage the most moving passages seem grafted from the diary of a mass observer. That superb study in crowd psychology, the description of the Queen Street riot in Auckland, could have been written round almost any character. The conversation between Johnson and the old derelict in the railway truck has, however, a quality unlike that of any other section of the novel —unlike, indeed, the work of any other New Zealand writer except perhaps that of Dan Davin in a moment of brilliance. The oracular remarks of the old man embody and illuminate the tragic spirit of the entire book, and seem the epitaph of a civilization. From this point the momentum of the narrative increases and Johnson becomes a character in his own right.

Inevitably he accepts the offer of a job from Stenning, the paranoid yet affable dairy farmer. Inevitably a triangular situation develops between Stenning, himself, and Rua, the farmer's irresponsible half-caste wife. Mulgan treats this situation with admirable delicacy, charting every cross-current, and emphasizing the casual nature of Johnson's relationship with Rua. When the storm breaks in one brief nightmare scene, and Stenning is shot, the two survivors are left with no common ground, only their mutual suspicion and antagonism.

Johnson's flight over the ranges is an occasion for some of Mulgan's most evocative writing. The struggle with weather in the Rangipo desert, and his hermit existence in the river cave, though described in a manner almost pedestrian, have all the size and flavour of a myth. He emerges in a state of emaciation and exhaustion to be befriended by Bill Crawley, an old and eccentric prospector whose life is scarcely less lonely by choice than Johnson's has been through force of circumstances. Here, as throughout the novel, the minor character is drawn with breadth and care, set vividly against Johnson's own grey personality.

When Johnson returns to the outside world, it is as a creature of a new and different species. His power to form social ties, his desire for a normal routine, have been sterilized; and from thenceforward he remains always in some degree an outlaw. The doubtful reinstatement of surrender to the police he rejects, choosing rather to escape from the country. A chance meeting with Rua intensifies his awareness of danger. With the somewhat unwilling and niggardly assistance of a past employer (Mulgan remains well clear of heroics) he wangles a job as deckhand on a Greek boat, and leaves without regret the country which has brought him only misfortune.

The epilogue in England and Spain lacks the tension of earlier parts of the novel. For the chief crisis in Johnson's life is behind him. He has looked for a 'place in the sun' and been defeated—partly by economic circumstances, partly by some inertness in himself which casts a chill over all his relationships, freezing the springs of feeling and action. Finding no

permanent place in present society he is drawn to fight for a future in which he may claim a part.

Man Alone, despite its overwide scope and uneven structure, is a powerful novel. Without a trace of shrillness Mulgan lays bare the roots of social antagonism in our society. In Johnson he has created a character seemingly nondescript who yet grips the imagination of the reader. As James Bertram remarks, he is a man without graces. The same may be said of *Man Alone*. It is a bare book; and one that will be remembered even if the conflicting causes of its composition are themselves resolved.

The State Literary Fund is to be commended for making possible the publication of this edition of Mulgan's novel. Whitcombe and Tombs have done a workmanlike job of plain, quiet printing easy on the eyes.

James K. Baxter

THESE DARK GLASSES. Greville Texidor. *The Caxton Press.* 6s.

ALTHOUGH written and published in New Zealand, this short novel suggests at almost every point the manner of *Horizon*. In subject and emphasis it has, too, a close similarity to Cyril Connolly's *The Rock Pool*, although it does not give so comprehensive a picture of the Bohemian pseudo-intellectual set as the latter book does, and it lacks Connolly's feline malice. The main difference, apart from the question of relative talent, lies in the fact that *The Rock Pool* is perfectly of its time, with atmosphere, period and character deftly blended, but in *These Dark Glasses*, which deal with the thirties, the mood is that of a Sartrian existentialist. I feel that there is in it more than a touch of masochistic nostalgia, and a consequent failure to achieve such a harmony between tone and setting as we find in Connolly or in, for instance, Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*. In other words, the narrator, although part of the atmosphere she descibes, looks at it from a viewpoint that is somewhat anachronistic, and more appropriate to a later period, in which disillusionment can be rationalized in a form of retrospective cancellation.

These Dark Glasses aims to portray the intellectual and emotional preoccupations of a group of artistically and politically minded intellectuals during the time of the Spanish War. There is no 'story,' nor does there need to be. Ruth Brown, a plain, earnest Communist publicist, has suffered a shock from the death of her friend, Victor, in Spain. She goes on holiday to Calanques, a seaside resort in the south of France, on the casual invitation of Jane, the wife of Julian, a moody painter. They are not expecting her. She rents a room, and lives out nine days of increasing boredom, frustration, disillusionment and *Angst*.

The action is reported half-diary fashion by Ruth herself. Thus we see the other English inhabitants of Calanques, who, since they belong nowhere, belong to this place as much as anywhere, through the half-accepting, half-rejecting eyes of this tired, colourless creature. They are nearly all communists or fellow-travellers, pansies, would-be artists and writers or something of the kind, living a life whose rootlessness is portrayed in the

mechanical aimlessness of their days and the modish clichés of their conversation. The only real human being amongst them is Emile, the predatory *coiffeur*, who is all Natural Man, and with whom Ruth has a grubby, tasteless affair.

A book like this is almost wholly a creature of style. Miss Texidor's manner is in the Stein-Hemingway tradition, without, however, the dry passion of Hemingway. Rather it has more of the quality of the style of John O'Hara's short stories—a kind of *New Yorker* slickness and brittleness, to which has been added a poetic suggestiveness, crisp and unromantic. The simple sentence, averaging ten words, predominates, with more complex forms admitted only on sufferance, so that a monotonous rhythm is established, which suits the character of the book, but which is somewhat fatiguing to read.

In such a style, a good deal depends upon the skill with which the writer can create atmosphere through imagery. Quite often, Miss Texidor's metaphors have an illuminating quality or are sufficiently novel to catch the attention. For instance, ' Beer has drawn a warm curtain over the buzz of the cafe '; ' It was certainly hot under the airless night of the canopy shot with the sick lightnings of ill-timed endearments '; 'A pair of confident white and tan shoes made themselves at home on a chair '; ' Howard carried the lilo. It wriggled and flopped coquettishly on his shoulder '.

Often, however, the images misfire, and one gets an uneasy sense of strain, of an unsuccessful attempt at cleverness, or of simple banality. For example, ' Under a rock that stared like a curse '; 'An empty voice that would never reach anywhere, like the chatter of pebbles on stone '; ' Like acid poured on a wound '; (the sea) ' was as still as stained glass '; 'A miniature hell of feelings in chaos '; and such curiously illogical figures as ' The lifeless wind passed down the empty street, sucking at Persian blinds, sucking your life away '. Sometimes, we get a successful image and a fussy conceit side by side, as in ' Under the Cap Rouge, the wind sickled the shallows. The sea was a bitten mirror.'

Despite this, the style is sufficiently alive to create a hot wavering haze through which the browned-off Ruth peers at the strange inhabitants of Calanques. Her state of mind is made plausible by her loss of Victor, sheer nervous fatigue, the stifling heat of the mistral, and her tooth-ache. So her growing suicidal feeling is rooted in precise things, and is a combination of mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion. The other characters are also related to their setting and their moods reflected in external reality. Calanques is summed up in sharp little details—the *boite* with its shrieking jazz records, the shimmering surface of the lazy sea, the bare cement dancing platform, the fashionably bare-footed tourists, the sour milk and grey potatoes. Even the characters we glimpse just for a moment add to the general impression—the old mad Englishman dancing the *danse du ventre*, the girl who collects sea-shells, the pudding-faced virgin, the dead man on the beach, so obscene, so meaningless.

It is these things, as much as the sea-shore setting, the weight of frustration and the strange vein of poetry investing the shabby milieu, which recall Albert Camus's *L'Etranger*. But Mersault's boredom leads to

a violent climax, while at the end of *These Dark Glasses*, we are left in doubt as to the end of Ruth Brown.

The calculated omission of inverted commas makes it difficult at times to distinguish direct from reported speech, but serves, I suppose, some purpose in adding to the general sense of flatness. The dialogue itself is one of the best features of the book; without overdoing it, the author reproduces most of the catch-phrases of the intellectual fringe. ' She'd had an affair with a sort of fisherman, she thought it was, from Marseilles. They had had it behind a rock, rather Lawrencian.' ' They put on a Walton record. A little bit bogus, some of them thought it was.' ' Jane began to explain about Julian, but Kate knew. He wants to get back to the womb. We must go for some walks.' ' In those dead days before we were socially conscious.' ' It's funny, one can't hear well in these dark glasses.' ' I don't feel comfortable under overhanging rocks. Something Freudian.'

All the virtues of the book are summed up in the admirably sustained scene of the Saturday picnic on the beach, when the conversation, the aimless comings and goings, the mixture of sex, ennui, sophistication, trivialities, and tired wasting of time, blend with the heat and the glistening sea to create a strange dream-world of transparent creatures floating at the bottom of a rock pool.

These Dark Glasses is, then, I believe, a fair representative of its genre, the kind of book one might not unfairly describe as ' clever '. It is interesting to find a piece of fiction written in New Zealand which deals convincingly with a foreign setting, which is not concerned with the fantasy-world of a child, ' dumb oxen,' adolescent sex repressions, life on a backblocks farm or men who drop cats into hot stoves, and which at the same time has a local application, for this country has its Calanques, too.

Yet when it is judged beside Norman Douglas, Evelyn Waugh, Ronald Firbank, Wyndham Lewis and the others who have written of such people, it seems somewhat thin, to belong to an outmoded form, to imply an approach and a centre of interest no longer very significant to-day. As a satire, it is neither witty enough nor original enough to make a lasting impression, nor as a piece of evocative writing is it sufficiently imaginative. The types with which it deals are tremendously unimportant in the post-war world, and they have been so often drubbed in fiction that it is difficult for a reader to take them seriously even as satirical material.

Greville Texidor has a style which, if not exactly her own, she uses with considerable skill; she has also a genuine novelist's eye for significant detail. While feeling that her material is well-worn and relatively trivial, I am forced to admire the consistency of atmosphere in the book. Insofar as *These Dark Glasses* marks the importation of the attitudes of 53 Bedford Square into New Zealand fiction, it has an additional interest. But since never for an instant does one feel behind the pattern the healthy anger of a satirist who finds lives meaningless because he knows they should have a meaning or the urbane judgment of one whose own vision of life rests on positive values, it is certainly not what the publisher's blurb claims it to be, ' a powerful moral fable for the times '.

J. C. Reid

PYRAMID VALLEY. Roger Duff. *Association of Friends of the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.* 5s.

ONE hundred and ten years ago, Professor Richard Owen exhibited to the Zoological Society in London the first moa bone to receive scientific investigation. Though it was incomplete he was able to assert that it had belonged to a Struthious bird resembling an ostrich in size, thus providing one of the most famous examples of the reconstruction by the palaeontologist of a whole animal from a fragment of one of its bones. Four years later, after examining further material, Owen stated that ' at all events, the *Dinornis Novae Zealandiae* will always remain one of the most extraordinary of the Zoological facts in the history of those islands, and it may not be saying too much to characterize it as one of the most remarkable acquisitions to Zoology in general which the present century has produced.'

Moa bones proved to be widespread throughout New Zealand, especially in the South Island, and from some swamps they were dug out literally in truck loads. In some of the dry caves of Central Otago a few skeletons were found, still partly covered with dried skin and flesh, and even feathers. Evidence also began to accumulate concerning the relation of the Moas to the early human inhabitants, and it became clear that these had been Moa-hunters. The most dramatic find in this connection was the recent one by Eyles of the Moa-hunter cemetery at Wairau Bar, where joints of moa, and moa eggs, had been buried with the bodies.

In spite of the abundance of moa bones and the fact that many mounted skeletons were exhibited in museums throughout the world, relatively few sets of individual bones existed, the exhibits being frequently assembled from odd bones. Sometimes even it has been shown that they contained the bones of several species of Moa, while different names have been given to different parts of the same bird.

The culmination and perhaps the most important of all the discoveries of moa bones is the site at Pyramid Valley. This is described in the present booklet in popular form, while the full record of the scientific findings is still to come. A great deal more actual digging remains to be done and the Canterbury Museum party has several years of work ahead of them. One of the most important things about the Pyramid Valley site is that it is yielding large numbers of more or less complete skeletons belonging to four different genera.

In this booklet Mr Roger Duff, the Director of the Canterbury Museum, set out to tell briefly the story of the Moa and to give the details of the remarkable find at Pyramid Valley, of the method of excavation and of the information being gathered from an examination of the specimens. Pyramid Valley swamp is an area of some three and a half acres, lying amongst the limestone hills near Waikari, fifty miles north-west of Christchurch. The importance of the site is shown by the fact that one skeleton has been found on the average for every six square yards excavated, which would mean nearly three thousand skeletons in the whole swamp, if they are evenly distributed. Even if they are not, there must still be a wonderfully rich assemblage of material.

The story of Pyramid Valley begins in 1937. To quote Mr Duff, 'One day in 1937 a North Canterbury farmer named Joseph Hodgen went with his son Rob to bury a dray horse. For soft digging, they chose the swamp paddock which had never been cultivated. Before the grave was deep enough to bury the horse, three massive leg bones were brought to the surface—the six-foot leg of the largest type of Moa known. The bones were put in the wool-shed and the men carried on with their work.' These bones eventually reached the Canterbury Museum through the agency of Mr David Hope, who realized that they belonged to one individual and were consequently important, and a party from the Museum went up and began the exploration of the site.

Mr Duff discusses the various theories which have been put forward to account for the very large accumulations of moa bones which have been found in swamps. The most dramatic example of this was at Kapua, excavated in 1895 by Hutton. Here in an area only twenty by thirty feet and ten feet deep, the bones of eight hundred Moas were found. Deposits of this kind were held to be the result of spectacular catastrophes, such as floods washing the bodies into heaps, or fires driving the birds into the swamps for refuge. Such suppositions are not necessary, and the occasional capture of a heavy bird in the sticky mud of the swamp, if continued over a long period, is quite enough to account for the numbers of bones found.

Four quite different Moas are represented in the collection, two of the long-legged and two of the short-legged types. *Dinornis* must have been some ten or twelve feet high, the tallest of all birds. The short-legged *Pachyornis* and *Euryapteryx* were only about five feet high, but their extraordinary appearance is described by Mr Duff as 'a forty-gallon drum supported on knee-length gum boots.' A point where other authorities may differ from Mr Duff is over his statement that only one type of Moa was contemporary with the early human inhabitants of New Zealand, the Moa-hunters. Archey for example, in his monograph on the Moa, mentions that Teviotdale when excavating the oven-debris at Papatowai, found bones of all the South Island Moas. One particularly interesting find was that of the fragments of an egg, fully formed but as yet unlaid, still among the bones of a bird. These two hundred fragments were joined together by the late Mr Stead, after months of painstaking work, to form the world's first specimen of an egg of *Emeus crassus*.

The swamp has a surface layer of peat, with yellow lake sediment below, and the leg bones of the Moas are often found still standing as they were when the bird was mired. The contents of the gizzard are preserved, with their masses of pebbles weighing up to five and a half pounds and vegetable food material. Examination of this is yielding interesting information about the diet of the Moa. Other bird remains are also found, the giant flightless Rail and Goose among them, and also the extinct Eagle. Canterbury Museum is planning a large diorama showing a reconstruction of the swamp at the time when the Moas and other birds were trapped, and it should be one of the most striking museum exhibits in the country.

This booklet is published by the Association of Friends of the Canterbury Museum and printed at the Pegasus Press in Christchurch. It is a most pleas-

ing production and everyone connected with it deserves congratulation. There are forty-eight pages and twenty-six photographs. These are excellent and range from aerial views of the site and scenes during the excavations to striking pictures of skulls. There are also some drawings and diagrams, including an interesting one showing the sizes and proportions of the various birds, and the periods when they lived.

It is pleasing to find such a well-illustrated popular account of this most romantic and important discovery. Nobody having any feeling at all for these things can fail to be interested by it, while the zoologist's appetite will be whetted for the full account of the scientific findings.

B. J. Marples

THE HISTORY OF OTAGO. THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF A WAKEFIELD CLASS SETTLEMENT. A. H. McLintock. *Otago Centennial Historical Publications.* 47s. 6d.

FOR the first time, the history of Otago has been told in one piece. Anyone whose bones (European, at least) have grown in Otago must feel in them the attraction of this history (which is at once racial myth and accurate research) of the migration and settlement of his people in what has been called the 'deep South'. It is an analysis of his intimate heritage, a giant family album in words, a plural autobiography round the tribal fire. It is Dr McLintock's triumph to have picked a careful way in a short time through a mass of research material without being bogged. To read all this and then tell the kind of story which flows effortlessly through nearly eight hundred pages is the work of a scholar with a first-class talent for narrative, rarely found in the writers of history.

The compelling quality of the narrative overpowers even the quirks of language which belong to journalism and give it at times that tinge of the slightly pompous which now hovers about the constant use of such words as 'but' for 'only' ('but momentarily'), of 'ever' for 'too' or 'always', 'naught' for 'nothing' ('his observations must ever pass for naught'), 'knew not' for 'did not know'; and of such phrases as 'flush of youth', 'womb of time', 'parlous state', the 'fickle strumpet, Fortune', 'shining example', 'mantle of respectability'; of the wrong use of a word like 'prototype'. A less fluent writer would probably not have written a sentence like this: 'At last, therefore, when hope had almost died, like a gleam of fitful sunshine, which, breaking through the dark and angry clouds of a lowering sky, momentarily dispels the gloom of sombre landscape, came the realisation that their trials and tribulations were at an end, and that their deliverance was at hand.' But then a less fluent writer might not have kept the story flowing at all, or might have made it colourless and dead like so much history-writing, or at the other extreme, too concentrated or laboriously original. So much of the writing is natural and straightforward and the judgments expressed so unpretentious and sensible, that even if this style of writing is not to your taste, you can accept these defects as but period trimmings which have the vitality of the not over-refined.

This flamboyant style is at its best perhaps in a passage on page 96 on the dying Maori race in the South. Here is a moving paragraph of extreme sincerity and penetrating judgment (which might have been written by Mr Churchill), coming to a climax in a passage about the ' maidens whose soft voices were stilled in death's icy night, the children and the mothers and the old men who shared the long unbroken sleep,' which has the authentic note of rhetoric. And yet, by contrast, it is artificial beside the bare sad words of Tuhawaiki that follow. The passage is too long to quote, but it might well be committed to memory by every school-child, in sorrow for the sins of the European race. It is easy, as Dr McLintock says (more elegantly) to feel arm-chair pity for the dying of the Southern Maori and it is good that this should be acknowledged by Otago's historian. But it is not perhaps out of place to point out that this is not reparation, as far as that is ever possible. If Te Rauparaha had not been checked further north with the help of the Southern chiefs, ' it is possible that the native troubles which distracted the North Island for so long . . . might even have created in Otago a situation which would have checked for many years all plans for organised settlement. Viewed in this respect, the deeds of Tuhawaiki and Taiaroa have placed posterity forever in their debt.' Posterity means not only Otago but New Zealand posterity, since it was Otago gold which contributed a large part of the Government's revenue in the difficult years of the Maori troubles. But if what Dr McLintock has written has any meaning for the people of Otago, is there any need for pity to stay in the arm-chair or debts to be acknowledged only on paper? It is a time of South Island centennials and as such a South Island opportunity to do something by way of expiation for the wrongs suffered by the Maori race.

If there is a major fault in this book, it is that it lacks the full perspective essential for a work belonging to the body of imperial history. It is critical analysis of the internal history of Otago colonization—Otago introverted. Southland and Canterbury are shadowy and the New Zealand scene vague except in the latest period of its life. We rarely see Otago from the angle of the outsider. This criticism is even more applicable to the treatment of the British Government, particularly in the period of gestation in Britain. There is nowhere an analysis of the Colonial Office attitude towards the Otago scheme comparable with the full treatment of the preliminary work of Rennie, Burns and Cargill. The absence of quotation from any Colonial Office minutes at this stage leaves an impression that the Colonial Office was a body without character, by inference ignorantly obstructing, for the sake of obstruction, the colonizing schemes of honest men. This was the way in which James Stephen and the Colonial Office were so bitterly attacked by Wakefield and Buller. Modern research has shown clearly the injustice of this criticism which was accepted as true for many years after Wakefield. It is now clear that at any time the Colonial Office attitude has to be related to what was happening in Australia, South Africa, Canada and elsewhere, to events at home and abroad, to the possibility of wars with native peoples which could involve Army and Navy, Treasury, Parliament and people. Any new commitment involved the sanction of Treasury which, understaffed, could and did sometimes take years to

answer inter-departmental letters, or could and did refuse its support, after which the Colonial Office was powerless unless Cabinet or Parliament interfered. Moreover, there was a lively and admirable sense of responsibility for the welfare and future of native peoples to which contemporary experience in South Africa made it even more sensitive. In contemporary New Zealand there were already signs of trouble in the North, and the virtual extermination of Maori tribes was not unknown in Otago. Settlements officially sanctioned in distant countries, even if self-governing or self-supporting, were always in the long run an imperial responsibility not to be lightly undertaken. In relation to Otago this is not a purely academic point in colonial history. It is risky to encourage even by implication the widely held belief that genuine settlers had at any time a moral right to settle in lands already populated, because their motives were genuine, their attitude unaggressive and their success apparent. No such moral right exists and yet belief in it may colour the attitude of many New Zealanders towards the Maoris.

In his interpretation of the history of Otago, Dr McLintock's approach is detached and liberal; born and bred in the tradition, he is both forthright and understanding. He makes it clear that the beating on the drum of Presbyterian pioneering has sometimes been too heavy and too loud, and that 'it was economics rather than religion which induced the tiny band to cross the seas', 'primarily in an endeavour to ameliorate their lot'. It is perhaps surprising that this point has to be insisted on; since Marx, due regard for economic motives has become an axiom, if not an obsession, in the interpretation of history. But there is courage in his insistence on the point that it was a society which was founded, not a Society, a religious community; it is snobbishness not to admit that money like morals or music or mysticism can be a divine instrument in forming a Christian Society. What is astonishing is that in a century increasingly dominated by secular ideals, the settlement of Otago should owe so much to religion. Burns defeated the more liberal and influential Rennie, and dominated the execution of the Otago scheme, by his powerful religious energy. There is nothing quite comparable to the Otago experiment in nineteenth century imperial history (unless it was the foundation of a Mormon state of Utah?). Canterbury was English and Anglican, of a like tradition to the Colonial and British governments. The Otago settlers were Scots of a minority Presbyterian sect and its aggressive narrowness must be read in that light, however distasteful some of its manifestations may appear a century later. Its fulfilment was not at all what Burns and Cargill meant it to be because other nineteenth century forces were strong enough to modify it in spite of itself. Their achievement was like the dream of John Ball, 'How many fight and lose the battle, and the thing they fight for comes about in spite of their defeat and when it comes turns out to be not what they meant and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name.' The Presbyterian Church unmistakably stamped the society whose parent it was. Being freed by Disruption from the more patrician character of society of the older established Churches, and deriving most of its settlers from the poorer classes, its social legacy was the egalitarian friendliness

of a society of which membership was dependent on acceptance of a certain type of admired character and the rejection of the thriftless, the feckless and the lazy. Translated back into theological terms, this was a reflection of the fellowship of the Presbyterian elect, the true believers. That there were dark spots and blind spots, Dr McLintock makes amply clear, particularly in his able analysis in his Epilogue:—the intolerance, the lamentable lack of understanding for the unloved arts, the identification of gaiety with frivolity, and the aggressive domination. The revelation of these blind spots, the squabblings of Little Enemy, the suspicion of the Churches, make mournful reading. But it is possible to be unjust to Dr Burns after decades of liberal thinking. Dr McLintock's view that Burns' Church had lost 'those greater gifts of benevolence, tolerance and charity which manifest the spirit of Christianity' is open to argument. Burns would have meant something quite different by these terms: but alas, we shall never hear Dr Burns preaching a sermon on Dr McLintock's *History*.

Vitality informs the whole of this work; each phase of Otago history is attacked with whole-hearted energy, and lives not only through the drama of events but through the life breathing in its characters. A man like Macandrew for whom it is hard to feel any great admiration, is given due place as the most prominent man of Otago's greatest days, nicely portrayed as a politician of abounding but unbalanced imagination, of ability, undisciplined by intellect. Every man who has contributed something to the history of Otago has come to life; and not least the lonely Methodist Missionary Watkin, living unhappily but doggedly in a hated environment at Waikouaiti, and the first rector, Simmons, unjustly the victim of the armed neutrality of the Churches. Otago is to be congratulated on having made the book possible and Dr McLintock on having written not only a major contribution to New Zealand scholarship and to colonial history, but a saga for the people of Otago as well.

M. A. Hall-Kenney

LEBANON: IMPRESSIONS OF A UNESCO CONFERENCE. M. H. Holcroft. *The Caxton Press*. 9s. 6d.

THE aftermath of World War II has produced a crop of organizations, set up for the most part by the United Nations, whose principal object is to promote the cause of international understanding. One of these co-operative bodies is Unesco, the General Conference of which held its third session at Beirut during the last weeks of 1948. Mr Holcroft was a member of the New Zealand delegation and in his latest book he provides us with 'a series of personal impressions' about what went on. It is a slim volume —ten chapters spread over seventy-eight pages—but one which ought to receive some attention since it has been ordered in quantity by the Education Department and has, presumably, thereby received official blessing on its use in schools.

The book begins, appropriately enough, with a chapter headed 'Arrival in Beirut'. Here we learn that each morning the members of the New

Zealand delegation, housed in a hotel eleven miles from the conference buildings, were driven by an Arab chauffeur down roads which wound through villages and olive groves, past sheep being killed in the doorways of butchers' shops, and women whose veils were 'frequently raised while dark eyes looked at the foreigners.' We are then taken impressionistically through various aspects of the conference's work. There is mention of the formal opening, the variety of nations represented and the language difficulties which resulted, the procedure and discussion involved in a typical morning's work, and the way in which a delegation—in this case and for obvious reasons the New Zealand delegation—conducted itself at meal times, indulged in good natured teasing and backchat, and maintained contact when its components were dispersed among sub-committees. We are introduced also, in a chapter entitled 'Important People', to various persons attending the conference and we learn in another chapter something of what Unesco is doing to relieve tensions between peoples. Finally, we pay a visit to the Lebanon countryside, read of the excitement of schoolchildren who witness the conference in session from the public galleries, and take farewell of the whole affair in a chapter fittingly called 'Last Words'.

I think this brief summary suggests that, although much of the book deals with trivialities, for after all we expect olive groves and veiled women in Lebanon and backchat among the members of a delegation, it nevertheless presents a comparatively well rounded picture of the variety of peoples, methods of procedure, and setting at an international conference. This feeling is borne out by a perusal of the chapter titles from which I got the impression that the series of essays to follow would help me to arrive in imagination at Beirut, pass as any individual would into the conference halls, mingle amongst the participants, thereby getting to know them and through them learning something of what Unesco is doing and stands for, and then with 'last words' take my farewell and return once more to the prosaic world enriched by an emotionally satisfying experience.

My anticipated satisfaction in this experience was not, however, achieved. Much of Mr Holcroft's writing is highly romantic and there are many attempts to raise the ordinary to the plane of Great Moments. Indeed, at times I felt that the author had set out to use his Unesco experiences as the basis of a novel for teen-agers. I read of dark-eyed womanhood, of an imposing and titled civil servant, smiling yet devastating in debate who, tall and in his early forties, danced superbly in partnership with amazing beauty, of brilliant sunshine, of fine food tastefully served, and of waiters hovering respectfully in the background. Just around the corner, I felt, there must be that murder with a sex or political motif to complete the picture. But it never came and so I turned my attention to the more serious aspect of the writer's work.

Here again I found myself disappointed. I could get no real insight into Unesco and its activities. I am as ignorant of its serious achievements as I was before reading Mr Holcroft's impressions and am left with the unpleasant suspicion that these conferences are little more than a rather attractive holiday for the participants, in spite of the writer's insistence that the delegates were tired at the end of a day.

Perhaps in saying all this I am being a little unkind to the writer who, as his foreword clearly states, has produced this volume about the conference ' to prolong the experience by writing about it.' No doubt he has succeeded in doing this for himself and perhaps for his fellow delegates. But what he appears to have forgotten is that, whereas he is in possession of the actual experience of the conference as a background to his impressions, this is lacking to the general reader. Mr Holcroft's impressions might, therefore, have been more meaningful in book form if he had dispensed with the more commonplace of them, that is about three-quarters of what he has written, and interlaced the remainder with a coherent and straightforward narrative of the conference and its work. He gets near to this technique in a chapter entitled ' My Day at Unesco '. In this he records the reaction of children to the conference scene, makes pertinent comments on the subject of school essay titles, and speaks sincerely and with an obvious intensity of the need for international understanding. Here is provided a factual account, illustrated by extracts from some essays written by a group of Arab schoolchildren, upon which the author comments as he writes, and his sincerity and earnestness makes him, in my opinion, convincing for the only time in the whole of his seventy-eight pages.

The remainder of the volume is hardly worthwhile. I do not think the book helps, as the foreword hopefully remarks, to ' make it easier for people who are interested in Unesco . . . to understand what happens when the representatives of member States meet in conference.' Rather does it provide, I think, an erroneous impression of things. I feel that a more convincing way of helping us in New Zealand to understand Unesco would be to have given less of the elusive personalities, the olive groves, the veiled ladies, and the beautiful dark-haired interpreters (where were the Hollywood cameras?), and to have provided instead a straightforward, clear and concise commentary on the conference—its setting, its work, and the people who attended.

B. J. Garnier

Notes on Contributors

DAVID B. CARRAD. Born 1916, educated at University College School, London, and Wadham College, Oxford. Taught at Dudley Grammar School near Birmingham before and after serving in the war. Senior lecturer in German, Victoria University College, since 1947.

B. J. GARNIER. Born in China 32 years ago, educated in London and at Cambridge University, came to New Zealand in 1939. Head of Department and senior lecturer in Geography, University of Otago. Broadcasts regularly on international affairs.

M. A. HALL-KENNEY. Born in Dunedin 1906. Educated Otago University and University of London, where she studied nineteenth century colonial history. Lectured in history at both Auckland and Victoria University Colleges. Brought up Presbyterian, has been a rationalist, is now an Anglican. Married to an architect living in Wellington.

B. J. MARPLES. Born at Hessle, England, in 1907. Professor of Zoology in the University of Otago since 1937. Always interested in ornithology, and in New Zealand specially concerned with the excavation and study of the bones of fossil penguins from the early Tertiary rocks of North Otago.

PETER MUNZ. Born in Germany 1921, grew up in Switzerland and Italy, University education at Canterbury College and St John's, Cambridge. Senior lecturer in History, Victoria University College.

N. C. PHILLIPS. Professor of History, Canterbury University College.

J. C. REID. Born in Auckland 1916. Author of *The Secret Tears* (verse), *Creative Writing in New Zealand, Catholics and the Films*, etc. Regular contributor of reviews and criticism to New Zealand and overseas journals, including *20th Century* (Melbourne), *America* (U.S.A.), and *The Catholic Review* (Auckland). Lecturer in English, Auckland University College.

T. H. SCOTT. Assistant lecturer in Philosophy and Psychology, Canterbury University College.

G. LE F. YOUNG. Twenty-nine. At school until eighteen. Sick from eighteen to twenty-eight, with occasional intervals at university. Now recovered, writing, broadcasting and doing criticism. Fond of life now I've found it.